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THE SITUATION

PAINS, DANGERS, DUTIES,

CONSOLATIONS OF CATHOLICS IN PRESENT TIMES.

BY MONSEIGNEUR GAUME, APOSTOLIC PROTONOTARY.

Watchman, what about the night?
Sentinel, what about the night?
Is. XXI, 11.

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LETTERS TO M. J. DE F**, AU CHATEAU DE B.

PAINS

LETTER I

DEAR

FRIEND, You remind me WHERE ARE WE GOING? This work, published sixteen years ago, is in your eyes the anticipated history of what we see, and you ask me to say in 1860, what I think of the situation of Europe, as I said in 1844. I leave to your friendship the responsibility of its judgment. As for the desires to know where we are, other than what they have for me that is personal, who could blame them? They are only too justified by the gravity of the circumstances.

At certain times of the day, the sun shines with all its brilliance. Man can then go about his business and walk without fear of losing his way. But there comes a time when the sun goes below the horizon. Without entirely disappearing, the objects darken and fade away. Soon night falls, and no one can work or walk without danger .

This alternation of light and darkness takes place in the day which is called life: the life of nations as well as of individuals. When the sun of faith shines on them, societies walk without fear of going astray. But there are times when error, long managed, ends up piling up clouds that obscure the horizon. The truth no longer projects, on most minds, anything but dubious gleams. The danger of going astray becomes imminent.

At these dreadful hours a sort of vertigo seems to fall upon the world. Heads are turning. The words change meaning. The strongest minds no longer reason, the others are completely unreasonable.
In the constant conflict of contradictory opinions, convictions waver. The uncertainty of the truth generates the uncertainty of the law. Hence a host of erroneous judgments and, too often, eternally regrettable acts.

If we are not there, at least that is where we are going. The night is done in Europe. I will give you only one proof. A trial, without example as without name in history, is brought against the papacy. For ten months, nations, daughters of the Church, have pleaded publicly against their mother. They accuse her of many things and demand that she be stripped. For or against, all of Europe took part in the debates. The cause seems to be heard. At this moment the sentence surrenders with cannon shots. Prisoner, fugitive or martyr, the Father of the Christians will henceforth eat the bread of the alms and will not know where to lay his head. Some say: well judged. The others: it's a done deal. A few: he is a parricide.

In the presence of these opposing judgments, **the right of the Catholic is to ask the priest for the light necessary to illuminate the present and to direct the future: Sentinel, what about the night? The duty of the priest is to respond.** To accomplish it, as much as it is in me, I am sending you these few pages. They will have achieved their goal if they help to bring the minds and hearts of Catholics into harmony with that of the Church, their mother.

First of all, you have to define the situation. What is it, and what are its distinctive characteristics? Freed from the thousand sophisms by which one seeks to obscure or distort it; Apart from the political accessories, which are only the twists and turns of the drama, the situation was summed up yesterday in three words: “Reduce the heritage of Saint-Pierre; make the Pope the pensioner of Europe; leave him only a tottering throne and a derisory scepter".

Today, the Revolution, which has become bolder, formulates its project thus: “An Italian empire, with Rome as its capital”2 .

That's the goal. In vain we have employed all the means to deceive the Catholics and Europe. **What the Revolution wants today, what it wanted yesterday, what it has always wanted, is neither Milan, nor Florence, nor Palermo, nor Naples, nor Venice: it is Rome.** If she takes Tuscany and Lombardy, Sicily and the Romagna, it is to take Rome. This, I repeat, is what the Revolution wants from an immutable will. I add: this is what she must want. Before saying the reason, it is necessary to properly characterize its current war against the metropolis of Catholicism.

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[1] Walk while you have light, so that darkness does not overtake you. Joan. 12, 35
The night comes when no one can work. Id. 9, 4

[2] The time for half-words is over. M. de Cavour has just said in open Parliament: We want the Eternal City to become the capital of Italy. Under what conditions, when and how? We can tell in six months. The denouement explains the comedy. 1

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Now, this war presents characteristics which essentially distinguish it from all the others, and which increase its gravity. In past centuries, we have seen several times the popes forced to leave Rome and flee into exile. The expeller had a proper name. He was called by turns Henri, Othon, Barbarossa. We knew who to blame. **Today, the expeller of the Pope has no proper name: he is called LEGION.**

Garibaldi, Fanti, Mazzini, Victor-Emmanuel and the others are only his soldiers. Legion is nowhere and it is everywhere. He lives in the air. All the languages he speaks. All the echoes of the world respond to his voice. It is he who puts the papacy on trial; who summons her to the bar of the whole world; who discusses his rights; which transforms into a problem what was in the state of dogma, and which makes cries out by millions of voices: The Pope is wrong. Legion is the Spirit who breathes on the world today and who arms it against the Holy See.

Formerly, the expulsion of the Vicar of Jesus Christ was an act of brutality and transient violence. Public opinion protested energetically and soon forced the captor to let go of his prey. Today, the same act is a calculated act of cold blood; an act **which forms part of a general plan** and which one claims to pass off as legitimate. We do not expel the Holy Father, we prove to him that he must retire. On the value of motives, opinion is divided: the papacy falls to the applause of half of Europe.

In the past, the spoliation of the heritage of Saint-Pierre did not deprive the Church of all its territorial independence. Owner of land in all countries, it continued to be a power to be reckoned with. Today, by confiscating the Roman States, we deprive the mother of Christian nations of the last independent piece of land that belongs to her.
stay.

Formerly, the papacy was for baptized Europe what the holy ark was for the people of Israel. touch it; it wasn't just hurting her heart, **it was attacking God Himself in the apple of the eye.** Today, the most monstrous attacks against the Holy See leave nations indifferent. The land of the valiant has scarcely provided a few thousand crusaders to defend the most sacred and glorious of causes!

Where does this change of disposition in the public mind come from? How to explain the frightening ease with which the Revolution marches to its goal? What is the meaning of the iniquitous enterprise, the last act of which will probably be consummated before the publication of these letters?

Every government relies on two forces: moral force and material force. For a weak state, essentially peaceful and surrounded by powerful states, the first is everything. At home and outside it, general affection, respect, popularity, in a word, must surround him and take the place of armies and citadels. In spite of inevitable tribulations, thus lived for ten centuries, peaceful and venerated, the royalty of Saint-Pierre, in the midst of belligerent Europe. Does this powerful popularity, born of the love and faith of the people, protect today the blessed royalty of Pius IX?

Europe today is three-quarters heretical, schismatic, rationalist and indifferent: that is a fact.

For a long time modern nations, even Catholics, have tended to secularize themselves, which means to free themselves as much as they can from religious authority: this is still a fact. **“Societies, it is said, are secular. They must be. Such is the spirit of the times, the sign of virility, the condition of progress”.**

From these two facts results a third: present-day Europe **no longer includes** a PRIEST-KING. She pities her subjects, as one pities the pariahs of India. But she understands and supports very well, like all heretical and schismatic countries, a KING-PONTIFF. In his eyes, papal royalty is a superannuated remnant of the Middle Ages; a shameful legacy of times of ignorance; a remnant of theocracy incompatible with civilization and an obstacle to the emancipation of the human spirit.

Hence, as an inevitable consequence, the division of opinion on the Roman question. Hence the thousands of sarcasms, spread everywhere, against the government of the Pope, against the political conduct of the Pope, against the subjects of the Pope, against the soldiers of the Pope. It is therefore a sadly true fact that the temporal government of the Vicar of Jesus Christ no longer has for defense the powerful popularity of former times. There lies the double cause of its instability and of the triumphs of the Revolution.

This situation is the work of Europe, which is only the more culpable. It will seem much more so to you, if you examine the object of the spoliation which it pursues with so much obstinacy, or which it allows to be accomplished with so much weakness.

Isolate the Church; push her back little by little out of society; weaken its influence on the world; bring it back to a state of purely spiritual power, as in the days of the Catacombs; make her dependent on Caesar; hamper its movements and bring it into the most difficult phase of its existence: For those who know how to read, such is the first idea, written in the supreme fact that one dreams of consuming.

To constitute the temporal power, absolute master of the earth by property, of intelligence by doctrine, and of the will by law; thus destroying the great social fact of Christianity, the hierarchical division of powers: Such is the second idea, already realized by all heterodox governments.

In other words, the actual fact means: **SUBSTITUTION OF THE ABSOLUTE REIGN OF MAN FOR THE REIGN OF GOD.** Such are the external characteristics of the situation. In my first letter I will try to tell you the mysterious reason.

Yours, etc.

LETTER II

DEAR

FRIEND, I promised to tell you **the reason why the Revolution must want Rome at all** costs. Already the last sentence of my letter made you sense it. I will explain myself more clearly.

It would be puerile to want to contest it: **We only blame the temporal power of the Church to attain its spiritual power. We rightly flatter ourselves that the progressive weakening of the latter will equally benefit what is called the emancipation of humanity, or, to use the word, the autocracy of kings and peoples.**

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Here, facts speak louder than words. Is it to obtain the few leagues of territory of which the Papal State is composed that the Revolution sets in motion all its public and secret forces? Because the successor of the fisherman from Galilee will have an independent piece of land to moor his boat and rest his head whitened by the years, is the European balance threatened?

How do the Italians themselves not see that they are fooled, and that their unification project is a utopia?
To want to unify Italy without the Church is to undertake the solution of an insoluble problem. **There are only two things that unite: God in heaven and the Church on earth. To claim to unite without these two elements of unity, against these two elements of unity, is quite simply to want to realize the absurd.** Instead of unification, the Italians, tribes of different origin and antipathetic races, will achieve division and anarchy, followed by the ruin of their country or brutal despotism. It will be, as in the good days of old, **unity in slavery and in misery.**

To motivate war against Rome on the liberty and happiness to be procured for papal subjects, is a bitter joke laugh. The conduct of those who allow it is the solemn denial of their words.

Why then this persistence in wanting to strip the Pope of his temporal? What unknown force pushes the world not to recoil, in order to achieve this goal, before any maneuver, however shameful and culpable it may be? Anyone who wants to give a serious explanation of this otherwise inexplicable phenomenon must have **recourse to the great mystery of history.**

The world is divided into two enemy cities: the City of Good and the City of Evil. Formed from the beginning of the centuries, the city of Satan continued to develop throughout the duration of ancient paganism. Its center is alternately Nineveh and Babylon. Queen of the world, Rome finally becomes her capital (1S. Aug. De Civ. Dei, lib. XV, c. v).

From there, as from the top of his citadel, the Prince of the century, princeps hujus seculi, reigns as Sovereign. From there, go the orders that make people tremble to the ends of the earth; the armies that ravage them; the proconsuls who despoil and oppress them; the scandals that degrade them; the edicts of proscription which, for three centuries, watered the winds of Christian blood in the cities and the countryside of the East and the West. Mute with terror before this gigantic power, humanity knows only how to give it its adoration, its gold and its blood.

However, the destinies of the Eternal City are not fulfilled. Depth of God's advice on this mysterious city! Rome must become the capital of another empire, no less powerful and more extensive than the first.
Another God will have to reign in the Capitol; other kings will have to live in his palaces; other armies submit the people to him; other proconsuls govern his provinces; other laws direct the human race, whatever climate it inhabits.
For a long time the world, enlightened by this new Rome, with the sun of truth, freed by it from the irons of slavery, will enthusiastically pay it a just tribute of gratitude and fidelity.

In spite of this beneficent revolution, the memory of pagan Rome, of its great material unity, of its lying liberties and of its deceptive splendors, will not perish in the heart of man any more than the original virus. **Satan will retain, from generation to generation, the thought of resuscitating his empire.** In the eyes of the sons of Eve, he will dangle the ancient glories of his reign. By insolent comparisons, he will dare to compare his creations with the creations of Christianity, and, too often, will know how to give preference to the former over the latter.

Its institutions, its arts, its wealth, its so-called great men, its splendid triumphs and above all the fascinating apotheosis of the human will, will become for many a double object of admiration and regret.
Under one name or another, **to resuscitate this order of things,** and, if possible, **to make Rome again the capital of a new anti-Christian empire** of which Italy, brought back to political unity, will be, as formerly, the proud municipality: Such is, whether we see it or not, the formidable idea hidden at the bottom of what stirs before our eyes.

Of this diabolical tendency, pointed out for a long time by some, and which has now become palpable, the proofs abound: two will suffice. On June 28 of this year, the Cardinal Vicar said in his edict on the occasion of the feast of the Prince of the Apostles: "The triumph of Saint Peter over the city of Rome has excited such rage in the demon that he He has never ceased to attack the Holy See with the fiercest war, nor to want to bring Rome back to ancient errors and barbarities. Without recalling his efforts in past centuries, have we not ourselves been, and are we not, at the present time, witnesses of those he directs against the bark of Peter? »

In his Encyclical of December 8, 1849, Pius IX, a first victim of the Revolution, is even more explicit. **"The Revolution, he says, is inspired by Satan himself. Its aim is to destroy from top to bottom the edifice of Christianity and to reconstitute on its ruins the social order of paganism. His great means is to make the glories of pagan Rome shine in the eyes of the Italians, in order to render Christian Rome odious, as being the obstacle which prevents Italy from reconquering the ancient splendor of ancient times, that is to say, say of pagan times :** quo Italia pristinum veterum temporum, id est Ethnicorum, splendorem iterum acquirere possit".

Thus speaks the greatest authority on earth. This language of the august Pontiff is too remarkable for me to content myself with reporting it. I will come back to this in my next letter. Today I limit myself to drawing a few conclusions.

To bring the world back to paganism, such is the last word of the Revolution. In unveiling it, the oracle of truth spoke of gold. The great obstacle to the execution of this infernal project, diabolici eorum conslii, is, in the eyes of the Revolution, the temporal power of the Holy See. She is not mistaken.

The Pope-King is the visible royalty of Jesus Christ over the world, it is the independence of the Church and of truth.
The Church being today everywhere stripped of the sovereign right of property, this visible royalty disappears with the loss of the Roman State. Unable to go any further, this is what the Revolution wants. This is why the domain of Saint Peter is so eagerly coveted; why Rome is again becoming the stake in the fight; why, finally, we see what the world has never seen: the Vicar of Jesus Christ threatened in his very capital, by a hundred thousand excommunicated, to the great applause of all the citizens of the City of Evil, spread throughout the whole world.

Rome taken, Satan once again becomes the prince of this world. For what ? Because the last social obstacle to his power and the authority of his lieutenants has disappeared. To create, as of old, a world where Jesus Christ, the King of Kings,

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will be as if He were not; a world where human power, without control, will have the Church and all spiritual interests at its fingertips: such is its goal. With the Pope-King, this goal is unattainable. You will understand it.

Representative of God Himself among men, the Pope is the incorruptible depositary and interpreter of the eternal law of justice and liberty; the wall of iron impassable to all despotisms; the immutable pontiff who alone can say with sovereign authority to oppressive kings, as well as to rebellious peoples: No LICET, that is not permitted; who, at the risk of his life, is obliged to say it, and who has said it faithfully from generation to generation, for eighteen centuries.

Now, the Pope-King is the materially independent Pope: he is the inviolable Pope. The inviolable Pope is the Pope who is free to tell the whole truth and to hurl anathema against spoliators and despots, no matter how tall they are.

The Revolution, which, under the mask of liberty and equality, is nothing but spoliation and living despotism, cannot support papal royalty. Her existence is for her a question of life or death. She perfectly feels that there is a force there, the only one that opposes another force whose triumph she wants today and tomorrow the apotheosis. It therefore directs all its attacks against this force of the Pontiff-King, because it alone prevents, as it will always prevent, the modern Caesars from engraving on their diadem the stupefying motto of their predecessors of old: EMPEROR AND SOVEREIGN PONTIFE, Imperator and summus Pontifex.

Let the so-called worshipers of freedom take it for granted. Their attacks on papal royalty are leading them, and us with them, to the most threatening despotism that has yet weighed on the world. **When the Pope is no longer king, kings will be popes.** All the freedom reserved for the peoples, who will have crucified her, in the person of her representative, will be to repeat, under the mortal embraces of slavery, the funereal words of the gladiators: "Caesar, those who are about to die salute you: Caesar , we who are about to die salute you".

If you want to get a good idea of the situation, here, my dear friend, is what you have to see: the rest, as you say, is for the myopic.

All yours.

LETTER III

DEAR

FRIEND, As I announced to you, I return to the words so remarkable and so little noticed by Pius IX. Recorded in a solemn act, these words are not spoken at random. We are going to see that they have a precise meaning, and much deeper than it appears at first glance. They are a ray of light cast into the depths of the mystery of iniquity, which is called the Roman Question. By pronouncing them, the Holy Father tore his last mask from the Revolution. From now on, no one is allowed to misunderstand the intimate nature and the final goal of the movement that is sweeping the world away.

Therefore, Pius IX and his vicar warn Catholics that Satan continues today, with frightening success, the efforts he has never ceased to make, for eighteen centuries, to return to Rome and remake it the capital of the City of Evil; that the object of the Revolution is to substitute pagan Rome for Christian Rome and to bring the world back to paganism.

But what ! is this possible and who has ever heard of such a thing? Our century, so completely foreign to everything it should know, will not fail to treat the words of the Holy Father as exaggeration and a figure of speech. You yourself, dear friend, will perhaps be surprised to learn that in delivering the program of the Revolution to Europe, the Vicar of Jesus Christ is the echo of the whole tradition. **The most illustrious Fathers of the Church, the most renowned theologians, the most authoritative interpreters of Scripture, have expressed the pontifical thought. Moreover, they agree in affirming that Satan will succeed in his project; so that the Church will end, as she began, in a gigantic struggle of which Rome, once more pagan, will be the center and the hearth.**

Whether that day is drawing near, that is not the question. What I mean is that the current attempt is a step towards this goal, and even the most significant that we know. In this respect, it is one of the most serious events that can occupy the human mind. I can't wait to fix your opinion. The limits of a letter not allowing us to bring you the testimonies of a tradition as old as Christianity[1] please content yourself with a faithful analysis.

“According to the teaching of the apostles, says the voice of the centuries, a day will come when Satan, full of rage against Jesus Christ and the Christians, will regain the ground he has lost, will strengthen his reign and will extend it to far. Then he will throw himself on Rome, because she is his rival and the abode of the Pontiffs. He will make himself master of it, will drive out the Vicar of Jesus Christ, will persecute the true believers and cut the throats of religious and priest

“Pagan under Nero and the other emperors down to Constantine, Rome was Babylon, the capital of the City of Evil[3] . Under Constantine, having become Christian and pious, it ceased to be Babylon and began to be the capital of the City of Good, holy and faithful city, Sion beloved of God, pillar of faith, mother of piety, mistress of holiness. Towards the end of her existence she will abandon faith, piety, Jesus Christ, the Sovereign Pontiff, she will again become pagan, Babylon, the capital of the City of Evil[4] .

“God will permit it so that we may distinguish the city from the church, Rome from the chair of Peter, and that the Romans may learn that it is neither to their merits, nor to the majesty of their city, that they are indebted to the badge

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[1] You will find them in Suarez, De Antichristo, lib. V, c. VIII, IX ; in Bosio, De Signis Ecclesiæ, lib. XXIV, c. VI ; in Corn. a La pide, in c. XVII and XVIII Apocal. ; in Bellarmine, De Sum. Pope Iib. III, c. XIII ; in Malvenda, from Antich. lib. IV, c. V ; in Baron. Last year an. 58, etc., etc.

[2] We have said that it is certain and established by the common tradition of the Fathers, which also seemed to us to be apostolic. Suarez, De Antich. book V, c. 9, n. 44. - He will hate Rome and will fight with her and will desolate her and set her on fire. Bellarm. I am about Pope book 3, c. III.

[3] The true Babylon was the first Rome, and the true Rome was the second Babylon. St. Aug. Of Civ. Dei, lib. 18, c. II.

[4] Abandoning faith, piety, Christ, the Pontiff, Babylon will become again. Cor. from Lap. in c. Revelation 17

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honor of possessing the Holy See and the metropolis of the Catholic world.

"This lugubrious destiny of Rome is in no way contrary to the promises made to the Church and to the Apostolic See. Both will always persevere in the faith and in the possession of the chair of Peter. Placed in one place or another, this pulpit will no more perish than the faith that flows from it. She will always be the same.
The Church will always remain visible, even if she were forced to flee to the mountains and hide herself largely in caves and deserts .

"Far from harming the Church, this revolution will increase its glory. Never was Christian Rome more glorious than when pagan Rome, thirsty for blood, persecuted her with the greatest rage. Never did she show more constancy and heroic virtues. It will be the same when Rome becomes pagan again. The glory of the Vicar of Jesus Christ and of the true faithful who will remain in his bosom will shine with a brilliance much more vivid than if Rome had always remained Christian and pious".

All this, my dear friend, supposes a fact which no one dreamed of two years ago, namely that Rome will again become the capital of a powerful empire, essentially hostile to the Church; that it will reconquer its ancient pagan splendor, and, with its corrupt morals, will resume its despotic ways. Well ! all these strange things, tradition has them known.

"Rome will return to its pagan splendor and idolatry . Pagan, she will strip the Sovereign Pontiff of his temporal and drive him out. Clothed in her ancient power, she will use it to persecute the Saints with more fury, and to immolate the martyrs with more cruelty than the first Caesars»3 .

By a coincidence which I cannot help pointing out to you, Pius IX employs to characterize the present promises of the Revolution, the same terms which the ancient doctors made use of to mark their fulfillment. They said, centuries ago: "Rome will return to its ancient splendour, to its riches, to its power, to its glory, queen and mistress of the world"4 .

Pius IX said today: "To alienate the minds of Italians from the Catholic religion, the enemies of the Church do not blush to affirm and shout everywhere, that the Roman Church is the obstacle which opposes to the glory of Italy, to its greatness, to its prosperity, and prevents it from acquiring again the ancient splendor of ancient times, that is to say, of pagan times .

The tradition adds: "Intoxicated with her new glory, Rome will say: I have driven out my husband and I am not a widow, I am full of people. My king is gone, I am no longer queen. Everyone obeys me and I obey no one, sedeo regina".

In truth, my dear friend, does not this language, centuries old, seem singular to you? Isn't that what we hear every day? Do not the so-called emancipators of Rome and Italy keep saying that Rome is a slave; that with the Pope expelled, the Eternal City will once again become free and queen as before? Do they not say to her to herself: Rejoice in the glorious destinies we promise you. We are your soldiers today, because tomorrow we want to be your sons and your citizens. If we fight, it is to give you back your ancient majesty, your ancient Capitol, your ancient triumphs. It is to make law the splendid capital of a great empire (Mot de Ca vour au Parlement, October 11).

The city of the popes, once again the city of the Caesars, is therefore the supreme destiny of Rome and the last triumph of Satan. How will this **apostasy be accomplished,** a thousand times incredible if it were not announced a thousand time With superhuman clarity, tradition has seen the road which will lead Rome to this fatal end.

"The transformation of Christian Rome into pagan Rome will not happen all at once. The Romans of later times were passionate about marbles and porphyries. They will make their glory consist in splendid buildings, in temples of idols, in statues of gold and silver, in precious stones, representing Venus, Cupid and the other abominable divinities of ancient paganism. They will love the games, the shows, all the things by which the ancient Romans corrupted the peoples and attracted them to the worship of false gods.

"They will get used to looking with pride at the crimes of their ancestors. They will make it the subject of their praise. Their ambition will be to reproduce the actions of Caesar, Pompey, Trajan. They will want to compete with them, resurrect their glory and all the vain greatness of ancient Rome. They will invoke the sonorous names of the Catos; they will speak of greatness, power, liberties: Roman fumes, which we already see many feasting on"6 .

The Romans thus prepared for a long time, what will happen? Here it is, again according to the fathers and the doctors: **"Atheists of Satan, atheists will pervert the upper classes among the Romans. They will make the ancient glory of their ancestors shine before their eyes; they will urge them to reconquer it and to restore the cult of the gods, to whom the empire owed its splendor. They will attract them to voluptuousness and independence, in order to lead them to atheism,** as has been seen many times in other countries. To cite just one example: a city no less holy, no less providential than Rome, Jerusalem was pagan under the Canaanites, faithful under the Jews, Christian under the Apostles, pagan again under the Romans, Mohammedan under the Saracens. .

"As punishment for her apostasy, Rome will perish. God will allow this great ruin to avenge the blood of the ancients.

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[1] It is not contrary to the promises made by the Church and the Apostolic See concerning perseverance in faith and in the chair of Peter, that Rome should be destroyed in that way, because the chair will never fail, nor will its faith stand, either in this place or in that place; for everywhere it will be the same, and the visible Church will always endure, and already if by the force of persecution it is forced to flee to the mountains, or to a great extent hide itself in secret places. His rez, that is. c. VII.

[2] The Roman city would then be restored to its former glory as well as its idolatry. Cor. ibid.

[3] Returning to paganism, he will persecute, drive out, or kill Christ and Christians, and especially the Pope. Id. - He will persecute the saints more bitterly and inflict more cruel martyrdoms than they suffered under ethnic emperors. Malvend where above

[4] He would restore Rome to its former splendour, wealth, strength, and pomp: as once she was the queen of the world and the mistress of the world.

[5] The enemies of the Church... are not ashamed to assert that the hearts of the Italians are being alienated from the Catholic faith, and to cry out in every direction, that the Catholic religion is an opponent of the glory, greatness, and prosperity of the Italian nation... so that Italy can regain the splendor of the ancient times, that is, the ethnic rum.

[6] We still see some of these ancient Romans feeding on the fumes and boasting.

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citizens and new martyrs from whom Rome will have drunk. The Romans will therefore be punished more severely than the others, because they will have sinned more seriously. Descendants of the former persecutors or inhabitants of the same city, they will become united with the iniquities of their ancestors, wanting to imitate them and restore to Rome the glory, the splendor and the power which it enjoyed under paganism.[1]

The men who hold this language are the greatest names in Christian history. They are called Tertullian, Lake Tance, Cyril, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Victorinus, Oecumenius, Cassiodorus, Sixtus of Siena, Baronius, Bellarmine, Suarez, Cornelius a Lapide, Bosio, and twenty others, and alios viginti. Devoted to the blood to Rome and to the Church, no interest but that of the truth led them to predict humiliations and calamities which they deplored while announcing them. Their works, received with respect as the source of true doctrine, are the torches which the past has handed over to the hands of the present to illuminate the future. What's left? if not to bow before this imposing testimony. Very weak would be the reason which would not go so far.

All yours.

LETTER IV

As far as I could, dear friend, I have just characterized the situation. You know the nature of the movement which draws us along, and, except error, the precise point where is the eternal fight of the evil against the good. It is summed up today in the spoliation of the Papal States, or, which is all one, in the **suppression of the visible royalty of Our Lord. Jesus Christ.**

Did this fact spring up like a mushroom under an oak tree? Did the idea fall into the head of any character yesterday? Is it all of a sudden, and so to speak with a single leap, that Europe finds itself engaged in the formidable impasse from which it does not know how to get out?

To think so would be a mistake. The too famous pamphlet: The Pope and the Congress, did not establish the situation: **it reveals it.** Everything that is emanates from what was. To see in the current situation only a transitory event, unforeseen or improvised, would be to reduce the giant to the size of the dwarf. The complete spoliation of the Roman Church is, as we have said, a fact announced for a long time. It has deep roots in modern Europe's past. We will search for them.

To fully understand a disease and above all to treat it successfully, it is necessary to know its origin.

Considered in its primary cause, which is the rage of Satan, the supreme plunder with which we are threatened is as old as Christianity. If we study it in its formula and its pretexts, in a word in its public and avowed manifestation, it is **only four centuries old.**

As you know, on entering the world, Christianity found the human race bent **under the yoke of Caesar.** All power was concentrated in a man's hand, straight in his will. This man was a god: and this god was called Nero, Tiberius, Caligula, Domitian. It was **unity in abjection.**

To break this charter of the most monstrous despotism, **Christianity divides power.**

Alongside Caesar, he creates the pontiff. To Caesar, subordinate to the pontiff, he entrusts the bodies; to the pontiff he gives souls. Like the soul and the body, the spiritual society and the civil society, united without being confused, march with a firm step towards their relative perfection. Caesarian despotism having become impossible, human freedom is saved. Three centuries of fierce struggle drive the devil out of Rome, its capital, which becomes the capital of the City of God.

As the eminent Cardinal Vicar said, the furious Satan did not consider himself beaten. Since his expulsion, he has not ceased to prowl around Rome and to make incessant efforts to return there. History, which tells them, also tells of his eternal defeat. In vain, to resuscitate the past, he sometimes enlists under his seditious banners the emperors of Germany and their lawyers. In vain the poet of Florence publishes the apology of ancient Caesarism: Dante fails like the Ghibellines. On the evangelical principle rested the European order for a long time, like the pyramid of the desert on its base of granite.

These old attempts against papal royalty will be, if you will, the roots of the present situation; but the true root is more modern. This root, without which the tree would never have grown, was planted four centuries ago in the soil of Europe. At that time, from sinister memory, arose among the Christian nations of the West a kind of **fanaticism for the political institutions of the pagan peoples.** Presented as the type of strength and social perfection, the great material unity of the world of Tiberius shimmers before astonished Europe. Ancient Rome rises from the tomb with all its procession of freedoms, virtues and victories. We sing of his greatness; the secret of his power is repeated. It is rebuilt in theory, and always at the top of the building shines **Caesar emperor and pontiff.**

Then a radical change took place in the traditional policy of Europe. **Machiavelli** was its main instrument. "His work," says an unsuspecting author. Mr. Malter, marks a new era; an **era of complete subversion;** not a simple rupture between religion and politics; but an **era of fundamental subversion** of their old relationships". (Hist. des Sc. polit., etc., t. I, 70).

What no one else had done before him, this man, son of his education, clearly formulates the theory of omnipotence caesarean, abolished by Christianity. He speaks it, he writes it, he makes it popular.

An **obstacle** is opposed, it will always be opposed to this omnipotence: **the property which makes the Church independent.** Machiavelli is careful to point this out. Throughout Europe, crowned ambition will, sooner or later, make it disappear.

In the meantime, the Florentine is putting his hand to work in his own country.

Twenty years before Luther, in the heart of a Catholic town a few leagues from Rome, he dared to publish that **the only obstacle** to the unity of Italy and the cause of all its evils was **temporal power. of the Roman Church.** We are amazed-

[1] Wherefore God will punish the sins of the greater in them; because to them, because of their approval and imitation, the sins of the elders will be imputed to them... because the crimes of the elders will please them, and they will want to emulate them, so that they may restore Rome's former splendor, pomp, and government under Gentiles.

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fact of finding under his pen all the policy of Piedmont, the Roman Question of About, the proclamations of Garibaldi, the program of Mazzini, the harangues of M. de Cavour, the memoranda of Victor Emmanuel and the instructions of the secret societies1 .

You will judge. "We Italians," said Machiavelli, "have a great obligation to the Roman Church: it is to be the cause of our political ruin. I mean that it is she who held and still holds our divided country. Never have union and happiness reigned in a country, unless it has entirely formed a single republic by obeying a single prince. Now, the cause which prevents Italy from having **neither a republic, nor a single prince** who governs it, is solely the Church of Rome.

"On the one hand, she has too little temporal power to seize all of Italy and become its queen; on the other hand, its temporal domain is not important enough for the fear of losing it not to have pushed the Church to have it defended by powerful princes, against those who, in Italy, could give it umbrage. . So the Roman Church prevented us from living under one head. Condemned to bear the yoke of many, Italy has fallen into such a state of disunity and weakness that it is a prey offered not only to powerful Barbarians, but also to anyone who wishes to seize it. This is what we Italians are indebted to the Church of Rome and not to others". (Disc., book I, c. XII)

To facilitate the suppression of the temporal domain of the Holy See, Machiavelli removes all scruple from those who want to undertake it: he assures them that religion itself is interested in it. Here, my dear friend, the surprise increases. All the accusations reproduced today for the same purpose and accepted by the great number, the works of Machiavelli contain them. "How Italy fell into ruins for having lacked religion, and that through the fault of the Roman Church"; such is the title of one of its chapters (ibid.). Here is the end of it: "We therefore owe it to the Church of Rome, we Italians, to be impious and rascals".

By this sample, judge the room. It is not necessary to say it: at the end of these **sophisms** and these **calumnies** is, what we see with our eyes, the expropriation of the domain of Saint-Pierre for reasons of Italian utility.

After the explanatory memorandum, Machiavelli pushes for practice. Everything that the unifiers of Italy and the spoliators of the Holy See have written for two years is copied word for word in the master's book. Flattering the hereditary vanity of his compatriots, Machiavelli shows them the attractive image of the old empire. "Italians," he cried, "do you want Italian unity under an Italian prince?" Do you want the return of those days of strength, glory and happiness which your ancestors enjoyed under the great Roman unity? get your hands dirty. The first thing to do is to drive the barbarians out of Italy (this is the Piedmontese name for the Austrians). She is waiting, almost dying, for the one who will heal her of her wounds, put an end to the oppression of Lombardy, put an end to the vexations which overwhelm Naples and Tuscany, and will finally heal wounds so inveterate that they are become fistulous". (Il Principe, c. ult. ediz., 1550. - Ibid., c. XXVI).

In order to restore the old empire in all its splendour, and to achieve the unity and Italian freedom which will be its happy consequences, a Caesar is needed. Machiavelli is careful not to forget it. To the prince, ambitious of this glory, he outlines the rules he must follow, indicates the qualities he must have. Above all, the liberating prince must **regard religion as a simple instrument of reign** "His duty, says the master, is to favor what presents itself to the advantage of religion. If he were certain that it was a lie, he must accredit it, in order to keep the people in fear and in submission. The more skilful he is, the more care he will take to do it. Such was the conduct of the Romans, the true models of good politics". (Disc., c. XIV, XVI, etc.).

To this **sacrilegious juggling,** the successor of Tiberius will add **perfidy** towards men. "As a well-advised prince," continues Machiavelli, "he must not fulfill his promise, when this fulfillment would be harmful to him, and when the reasons which determined him to promise no longer exist. It will always be easy for him to find pretexts to color his lack of speech. He will have to understand that it is not possible for a prince, especially a new prince, to observe everything that makes honest people. It is therefore necessary, as far as he can, that he does not stray from the path of good; but that if need be he knows how to enter into that of evil. Moreover, **what is considered is the result.** If he succeeds, all the means he will have employed will be considered honorable and praised by everyone". (Il Principe, c. XVIII).

From these maxims and others of the same kind, exposed with the same crudity, Machiavelli concludes that his hero, must take from the lion and the fox, in accordance with the model, left by the old ones, our masters in politics. "The prince, he said, having to act like an animal, will try to be both a fox and a lion. The more he knows how to play the fox, the better he will succeed. But it is important to hide this beast well and consequently to be a great concealer and a great liar"2 .

You see it, my dear friend; considered in its formula and in its pretexts, the situation is not new. If, despite more or less numerous precursors, Arianism is rightly attributed to Arius, Pelagianism to Pelagius, because they clearly gave the formula for these heresies and were their apostles: history is therefore well founded in pointing out Machiavelli as the father of Piedmontese or Mazzinian politics, since he was the first to trace out its program and prepare its triumph.

If the theory of the spoliation of the Roman Church goes back four centuries, the partial realization of this supremely anti-Christian principle is scarcely a few years later. In Machiavelli's time, the Church was the biggest landowner in Europe. No property was more sacred than his. Everything changes with the Cesarean policy, restored by Machiavelli and his immense school. Developed by Lutheranism, applied by all governments, the spoliation of the Church made the rounds of Europe. In the ancient sense all kings want to be Caesars, all princes want slow to be kings.

In front of their ambition, excited and justified by the Florentine, **fall all the protective barriers of the right of**

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[1] On March 4 of this year, Ricasoli, governor of Tuscany, said to the troops: "Our constitution can only be hindered by his eternal decrepit enemy. This enemy is the temporal power of Rome".

[2] But it is necessary to know how to color this nature well, and to be a great pretender and dissembler. ibid

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ecclesiastical property. The despoiling of the spouse of Jesus Christ, or, as they have been saying for two years, **annexation,** rapidly invaded Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland. He goes to England; and there, as in all other countries, it is consummated by the shedding of torrents of Catholic blood.

Helped by lawyers, and it must be said, by certain members of the clergy, pagan Caesarism penetrated more and more into the politics of governments. The spoliation extends to the Catholic States. Joseph II spends his life robbing the Church. France follows in the footsteps of other nations and distances them. Portugal, Spain, even Italy have imitated it. It is therefore true that what is being done today against Rome is only the complement of a sacrilegious attack, begun nearly four centuries ago, and carried out throughout Europe. Such is the giant against which we have to contend.

Such is also, my dear friend, the current situation from the triple point of view of origin, theory and practice.
Tomorrow, I will return with you to the intimate cause of this strange phenomenon.
All yours.

LETTER V

The abolition of the temporal royalty of Our Lord Jesus Christ by the forfeiture of the Pope as sovereign prince, this, my friend, is the parricidal goal toward which the so-called Christian nations have been tending for several centuries. Today, less than ever, it is impossible not to see it. Now, I repeat, this most odious and threatening fact in history constitutes **the situation.** Around this supreme attack pivots all that we see, and all that we do not see.

Let us be careful, we Catholics, not to take the lead. The emancipation of peoples is a pretext; the unification of Italy a means; Piedmont a mask; Victor-Emmanuel a labourer. The duplicities of diplomacy, treaties made or broken, the marches and counter-marches of politics, the very halts of the Revolution, all these things which arrest the gaze of the crowd, are only card tops, incidental circumstances and, as I have already told you, the twists and turns of the drama. What is it in its **intimate nature** and what is its true, main actor? To this double question you have read the answer, indicated in the Pope's encyclical and in the edict of his vicar. To make the terrible but profound truth of this answer shine in the eyes of all, I take the liberty of addressing you and all serious minds the following questions:

How is it that the Catholic Church, queen and mother of old Europe, has for several centuries been obliged to withdraw ceaselessly into itself and to march from concession to concession, before the modern Spirit which does not does he have any?

How is it that she saw all the roots which, through property, attached her to the soil of a cultivated land of her
hands, watered with his blood, successively torn from north to south?
How is it that after eighteen hundred years of possession and affirmation, Christianity finds itself today, not in the presence of schism and heresy, but in the face of the universal denier that it had to fight by entering the world?

How is it that the nations of Europe, baptized for twelve centuries, have reached the point of no longer being able to allow the Church, their mother, to possess among them an independent inch of land?
How is it that the royal authority of their Redeemer, represented by His Vicar, this authority surrounded by the respect of so many generations, consecrated by so many secular benefits, is today so misunderstood that one can play it with impunity? in theatres; so unpopular that it no longer has support in the conscience of the great number, and that, despite its angelic leniency, Pius IX is threatened with becoming the Louis XVI of the papacy?

How is it that we can name him as a criminal at the helm of Europe and that we give him a proper trial, to establish that he must strip himself of his temporal sovereignty, under pain of , if he does not, to be declared responsible for all the disorders committed and all the blood shed in a violent expropriation?
How is it that instead of raising a unanimous cry of curse against the despoilers, the immense court is divided into two parties, the most influential of which applauds with frenzy the scandal of the trial and the condemnation of innocence? ?

Where does this fierce hatred of sons against their father come from? What is this monstrous phenomenon, unknown in the annals of crime?

Since it is obvious that the temporal power of the Church is only resented in order to weaken, hinder, annihilate, if possible, its spiritual power, how did the Europe of Charlemagne and Saint Louis, the he Europe of the Crusades, the daughter so dedicated to the Church, has she come to repeat the death cry of the deicide people: **We no longer want her to reign over us!** A priest-king is an insult to civilized nations; old debris of a time that is no more, it must disappear: its presence stains the Age of Enlightenment?

Such, dear friend, are the serious questions which stand before us. What is the answer ? Those who doubt nothing, because they suspect nothing, will improvise a thousand of them for you. For you, the word of the Holy Father will be the adequate expression of the truth. Indeed, the serious observer, placed on the edge of the sea, does not explain the wave which breaks at his feet by the wave which immediately follows it. To find the cause of the storm, he goes back **to the very center of the movement.**

Now, at the head of the history of the world and of the theology of all peoples, is written a truth which accounts for everything, and without which nothing can be accounted for. Whatever corner of the globe it inhabits, or the cult it professes, humanity repeats from generation to generation: **“Since the original fault, two opposing spirits hover over the world: on the one hand, the spirit of good, the Holy Spirit; on the other, the spirit of evil, Satan, the rebellious angel. Whatever he does, man lives under the sway of one or the other. If he escapes the action of the spirit of good, he falls, in an analogous proportion, under the action of the spirit of evil, and vice versa. What is true of man is true of peoples, true of humanity”.**

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In vain the language of the world, ignorant and light, disguises under insignificant or lying words, this immutable ground things. **Here, in its principle, is the only philosophy of history and the intimate cause of evil.**

This posed: in its relations with Christianity, what has been the general course of Europe for several centuries? In particular the current insurrection against the papacy which is the last term: how do you judge it? Is it the reign of the Holy Spirit, which extends more and more over the world? Or is it the reign of Satan, which is growing visibly?

IT'S ONE OR THE OTHER: THERE IS NO MIDDLE.

If in doubt, compare times to times, fruit to fruit. To form your conviction, let us stop, my dear friend, at a single example. From these blocks of granite which are called the Barbarians and which were our ancestors, the world has seen the children of Abraham come out. The name of the time, witness to such a miracle, is an insult today, I know. I also know all that one has the right to reproach the **Middle Ages.** It is none the less true that the Spirit by which he was animated achieved his **four masterpieces,** the only four advances worthy of the name that humanity has ever accomplished.

He constituted religion. There was a day when all of Europe sang the same symbol. From east to west, from north to south, not a discordant voice disturbed this vast concert. **Unity of Faith: Magnificent Triumph of Truth over Truth fear.**

He constituted the Church. There was a day when the guardian society of the faith became the most loved and respected power, the greatest landowner in Europe, and the clergy the first body of the state. **Authority of the Church: magnificent triumph of intelligence over force.**

He formed the company. There was a day when no anti-Christian, and consequently anti-social, law soiled the codes of Europe. To maintain harmony on earth, as the sun maintains it in the firmament, the King of kings, represented by His Vicar, hovered above all kings. The decision of a father, the infallible organ of the eternal law of justice, was the last reason of right and the end of conflicts. **The word instead of the sword: magnificent triumph of freedom over despotism.**

He made the family. There was a day when, throughout Europe, the family rested on the four bases which make its strength, its happiness and its glory: unity, indissolubility, holiness, perpetuity through respect for authority. paternal, during life and after death. **The spirit instead of the flesh: magnificent triumph of the new man over the old man ;** radical healing of polygamy, divorce and selfishness, hideous wounds of the pagan family.

Such is the ascending scale traversed by the epoch of which I speak.

See, my dear friend, what modern Europe is going through. What has become of these four powerful columns of the building religious and social of our ancestors?

Where is the unity of faith today?

Where is the property and the royal power of the Church?

Where is Christian public law?

Where is the Christian constitution of the family Under [1] ?

what influence have these masterpieces been defaced or destroyed? These shaken or broken columns? This progress replaced by **retrograde** steps , which set us **back** twenty centuries? The Seine will pass over the towers of Notre-Dame before common sense is prevented from answering: No, such are not the works of the spirit of God.

But if it was not under the influence of the Spirit of good that all these ruins were made, then it was under the influence of the Spirit of evil. There is no getting out of there.

Thus, for those who do not seek to pay themselves with words or to pay others, the lamentable destructions that I have just pointed out, and those no less lamentable that are being prepared, in a word, what we see is the **work of the ancient prince of this world, driven out by the Redeemer, but returned to the bosom of the Christian nations, with an authority not very different from that which he exercised before his defeat at Calvary.**

From victory to victory he marches today, escorted by Europe, his auxiliary or his accomplice, to the conquest of Rome, his former capital. To remake the Rome of the Popes, the Rome of the Caesars, in order to lead the world back to the pagan social order, regarded as the epoch of the splendor and prosperity of Italy: there you have it, as we have heard, what Pius IX and his vicar say loudly, without hesitation and without a sentence, of the Revolution and its projects.

Such are, my dear friend, and I have my reasons for repeating it, **the exact definition of the situation** and the last word of the drama which holds us in suspense. Neither the puerile interpretations of worldly wisdom nor the foolish denials of bias will succeed in changing the word, any more than the poor expedients of diplomacy can destroy the fact.

All yours.

DANGERS

LETTER VI

DEAR

FRIEND, In painting the picture of the situation, I said **the pains of Catholics.** Since Calvary, do you know any more legitimate and more poignant? Look to the east: what do you see? In Cochinchina, 500,000 Catholics, hunted down for three years like wild beasts, delivered to all the horrors of hunger, prisons and torture. In Syria, a real butchery of Christians: a massacre which, by the number of victims, the refinements of the cruelty, the duration and the extent of the extermination, distinguishes itself from all the others.

Take your eyes to the West: what a sight? The **reign of the demon** extending with unheard-of rapidity; a whole world that calls itself Christian, rising up against God and against His Christ, vomiting against them, in all tones and in all

[1] By judgment of January 16, 1860, the Court of Cassation declared that divorce is in the law of nations? (Which ?)

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your tongues, insult and blasphemy, mocking also their authority, their promises and their threats. A whole family of baptized peoples, calumniating the best of mothers, lavishing outrage on her, stripping her, driving her from her last asylum, and waging war on her with more relentlessness than they do on the Turk, the slaughterer of their brothers.

The most sacred principles of public law, trampled underfoot with hitherto unparalleled cynicism; human freedom, the price of divine blood, betrayed and crucified; property, the family, shaken to their foundations; the hypocrisy of Judas, the cowardice of Pilate, felony under all names; then theft, robbery, the upheaval of all things divine and human, erected into rights and even into duties; finally and above all the ingratitude and insensitivity of the culprits: here is a corner of the picture.

See, on the other hand, this Old Man, much less venerable by his white hair than by his supreme dignity and by his angelic sweetness, overwhelmed with humiliations; this King, the most legitimate of all kings, who passed by doing good, accused of being a malefactor; this holy Pontiff who never ceased to love, to pray and to bless, reserved for captivity or death; this Representative of the freedom of the world, condemned as a tyrant; this Father who weeps and who asks in vain of those who call themselves his sons, if not consolations equal to his sorrows, at least the alms of some effective help in his extreme distress. No powerful voice responds to his and he is reduced to saying, "I fed and brought up children, and they despised me."

Thus, Calvary in the east, Calvary in the west, and on both, the Church our mother, crowned with thorns and crucified: in the East, by the infidels, in the West by her own children.

Nothing is missing from the Golgotha scene. This, my friend, is the subject of our tears and the tears of all Catholics.

After pain comes **danger.** When the supreme outrage against Rome will be consummated, the spoliators and their followers will say: It is an accomplished fact, and they will affect not to think about it any longer. We Catholics will say to ourselves: This is a fact that has barely begun. And we will be on our guard. **The era of perils will have come,** instabunt tempora periculosa. What did I say ? my friend, we are already there. Allow me to point out to you in this letter a very formidable danger, from which too many have not been able to escape: it is **the danger of sophism.**

Satan is **a liar** by nature, mendax; he is the father of lies, pater mendacii. The first revolution was made by a lie, eritis sicut dii. Daughters of this one, all the others are made by the same process. The more serious they are, the more they lie. Now, today the lies, the hypocrisies, the sophisms, woven with an infernal art, circulate slowly among us, more numerous than the atoms in the air. Volumes would not suffice to contain them. I limit myself to pointing out to you two or three, around which an infinity of others are grouped.

We have seen that for four centuries one of the most honest and above all the most constant occupations of the Caesarian governments has been to despoil the particular Churches. Made by the spoliators themselves, civil law has consecrated theft. She held and wanted us to hold as legitimate owners, the possessors of the usurped goods.

By an incredible audacity, the mother Church was asked to ratify the stripping of her daughters. Threats of schism, hindrances of all kinds to the exercise of his spiritual authority, nothing was omitted to extract his consent. In fear of greater evils, the Roman Church **resigned** itself to **painful concessions,** while demanding from governments a suitable indemnity for the dispossessed churches. Such is **the basis of modern concordats.**

What is the Revolution doing today? It turns against the mother the arguments employed with success against the daughters. For a long time the fire of rebellion has been blown in the Roman states: money, slander, sacrilegious derision, secret agents and accredited agents, open violence, everything has been done to make the temporal government of the Holy Father impossible. When the ground was mined and a spark was enough to determine the final explosion, the Pope was told: “Your position is no longer tenable. In your interest, and for reasons of public tranquility, recognize the fait accompli. Imitate Pius VI, your venerable predecessor. Consent to the partial expropriation of your estates: you will only lose inconvenience. As an indemnity, the Catholic nations, your devoted daughters, will make you a magnificent endowment.

“You cannot, Most Holy Father, find bad for the Church of Rome what you have found good for the other Churches. You said to them: A violent act has dispossessed you of your property. We are deeply grieved; but against force there is no resistance. For the sake of souls, We waive your rights. Accept, in exchange, the stipulated treatment. Because you will be less rich, religion will not perish”.

Reduced to its simplest expression, this honeyed speech is, forgive me the word, an argument worthy of Mandrin. “I stole from you yesterday, so I have the right to steal from you today. Yesterday you allowed yourself to be robbed, and well you took it; to resist today, in addition to being dangerous, would be to lack logic and lie to your precedents”.

If the impertinence is odious, the sophism is palpable. The painful concessions which the Holy See believed it could make to the detriment of the particular Churches, it cannot, at any price, make for itself. First, a solemn oath, taken by each Sovereign Pontiff, opposes it. With no less force the interest of the universal Church resists it. This truth will jump out at you.

That the Churches of France or Spain, for example, are for the temporal under the dependence of the governments; that this dependence more or less hinders their freedom of speech and action: it is a great misfortune, no doubt; but it is a local misfortune. These Churches, not being charged with teaching all nations, neither Catholic truth nor the general government of the Church, will suffer essentially from their servitude.

Is it the Church of Rome, the question is quite different. What becomes of the universal teaching of truth and of the government of the Catholic world if the metropolis of truth, the mistress of all the Churches, ceases to be fully independent? If he is not completely free in his word and deeds, how will his august Head fulfill the divine mission of confirming his brothers in the faith, everywhere and always? Even supposing that he can give it, what becomes of the authority of his teaching?

In the words of the Pope, stripped of his territorial independence, guest, vassal or pensioner of any sovereign, we will always be led to fear the influence of the master. Malignity will seek her; the spirit of insubordination, the

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bad will or national jealousy will know how to find it. **Obedience ceases to be blind and filial: it hesitates; it's all over with faith.**

With faith perishes human freedom. This freedom which consists in resisting to the point of blood, rather than bending under the yoke of error and iniquity; this freedom to which the world owes all its glories rests essentially on **unshakeable faith in truth and justice.** Make suspect the authentic organ of both, and instead of obeying to the point of blood, the man does not obey at all. The government of the word has lost its authority; you have substituted for it the **government of the sword.**

In defending his independence, it is therefore neither Ancona, nor Bologna, nor Rome, nor any piece of land whatsoever, that the Pope is defending: it is the most glorious prerogative of man, that of which he rightly shows himself the most jealous and proudest is **freedom,** the freedom of all, the freedom of the world. We will soon see that, in his heroic struggle, Pius IX defends something quite different.

Let's move on to a second fallacy. “The Church, it is said, subsisted without territorial independence, and the government of the word was no less powerful. Territorial independence is therefore not necessary for the Church”.

This is **to take the fact for the right ;** it is to confuse the times and the circumstances, with the aim of confusing the question and for the pleasure of making one more sophism. Here is the truth: in establishing the Church, the Son of God has given it all that is necessary to achieve its end. The end of the Church is the sanctification of souls by the free exercise of her spiritual authority. Now, **the material independence of the Roman Church is necessary for the exercise of the spiritual authority of the Holy Father, organ and supreme head of the Church.**

So have declared it twenty times, in past centuries, the Vicars of Jesus Christ, and, in modern times, Pius VI, in particular, and Pius IX. As you have just heard, simple common sense itself says it so loudly that it is useless to insist. The material independence of the Holy See is therefore by divine right.

Doubtless the Roman Church did not enjoy it from the beginning. Would one wish that she had possessed territorial independence, at the very center of an empire whose head was Nero? But because it was not currently realizable, the right was neither less real nor less necessary. When, later, she claimed and exercised it, she did not invent a new right, she simply proclaimed the right inherent in her constitution.

It is added that in the first centuries, when the Roman Church enjoyed no territorial independence, the government of the word was never more powerful. I know it, and the bloody annals of the martyrs are proof of it. Who then imprinted on the word of the Roman Pontiff his all-powerful authority? In the absence of material independence, the visible guarantee of the freedom of his teaching, Pierre offered his moral independence: **he gave his life.**

In the middle of the amphitheater, under the ax of the executioners, under the teeth of the tigers, in the sight of an immense people, come naked from all the corners of the world, the Bishop of the great Rome, the Father of the Christians, courageously letting himself be immolated, guaranteed the truth of his teaching. From Nero to Diocletian, this is how the popes signed their bulls. “How, exclaims Pascal, not to believe in witnesses who allow themselves to have their throats cut?” It was therefore believed: **faith rests on martyrdom.**

Was this state of things to, could it, last forever? Was this a regular existence? Obviously not. Precisely because she is militant and had fought gloriously, the Church had to make conquests. By procuring her material independence, these conquests were intended, in order to authorize her word and command the faith, to dispense her from martyrdom. Such, my dear friend, is the profound reason for this independence which people are trying to wrest from the Church today: Satan knows what he is doing.

As this question concerns both the present and the future, I add a few words. Of the sacred right to independence, the facts, in agreement with the reasoning, together show the existence and the necessity. Relative to its territorial independence, the life of the Church is divided into four periods.

The first, from the beginning to Constantine. At that time there was no territorial independence: and it was the era of persecutions and martyrdoms; it is the empire of Satan over the world; it is the reign of the Church, a purely spiritual power, restricted to simple individuals.

The second, from Constantine to Charlemagne. At that time, incomplete and ill-defined territorial independence: and it was, as we have noticed before us (See the theolog. Muzarelli: Wealth of the clergy), the era of tribulations and incessant vexations of the Holy See ; the era of heresies, swarming like tares in the insufficiently defenseless field of the father of a family; the era of the struggles of the Church against Satan, who still disputes the ground with her step by step.

The third, from Charlemagne to the revival of paganism. At that time, complete and authentic territorial independence: and **it is the social reign of the Church, substituted for that of Satan; it is the visible royalty of Jesus Christ everywhere recognized; it is the defeat of all heresies, none of which is powerful enough to take root in the soil of the West.**

The fourth, from the revival of paganism down to us. From this time, the territorial independence of the Church is again attacked, and, as we have seen, long before Luther. **This independence is becoming more and more incomplete. Immediately begins again the era of tribulations, schisms and heresies. The social reign of the Church is visibly weakening, and that of evil is growing in analogous proportions.**

Finally, even today, the Church is being brought back to her state of complete dependence and of purely spiritual power, reigning, as in the days of the catacombs, over simple individuals. Caesar and the Pope will meet face to face. God ensures that tomorrow does not start the era of persecutions and martyrdoms again!

You see it, dear friend; **the whole of history shows the spiritual authority of the Church, increasing or diminishing in the same proportions as its material independence.** In their high significance, the facts which I have just indicated, are corroborated by another no less constant. It is claimed that territorial independence is not necessary to the Church; that the riches of the clergy are rather an evil than a good; that poverty befits the spouse of a poor God much better, and gives her, today especially, a more universal and more respected moral authority.

If this is so, how is it that all the princes, all the peoples, all the ages who have loved the Church the most, who

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have surrounded it with a more filial respect, have hastened to increase its material independence, by paying homage to it with rich properties, sometimes with whole towns and provinces? Their love was quite blind. Somewhat clairvoyant, he would have abstained; very clairvoyant, he would have reduced the Church to dependence and begging. On the contrary, the heretical and schismatic princes, the impious and revolutionary governments which have despoiled the Church and which prevent her from acquiring, alone have understood the true interests of religion.

On this account, Constantine, Charlemagne and their imitators were fools and very bad Christians; Henry VIII and his ilk, men of common sense and truly evangelical Christians. Garibaldi and Victor-Emmanuel, who today leave the Pope nowhere to lay his head, are the first two Catholics in the world!

And there are strong heads who allow themselves to be taken in by such a **sophistry,** who defend it, who propagate it and who do it. accept ! There remains another, the examination of which I reserve for my first correspondence.

All yours.

LETTER VII

DEAR

FRIEND, The sophisms of which we have done justice are intended to establish in principle that material independence is not necessary to the Church, and that poverty suits her better than wealth. From the particular we pass to the general. It is claimed to prove that the present Pope must abandon the provinces invaded by the Revolution. For this, we cite the example of Pius VI.

The choice is not happy. It is precisely because he has before his eyes the experience of his venerable predecessor that Pius IX must yield nothing. After signing, forcing and constraining, the Treaty of Tolentino, did Pius VI keep the rest of his states? Did the surrender he believed he could make to brute force prevent him from being driven out, a few months later, from Rome and Italy, from being deprived of his freedom and from dying in prison? Agree that such a result is very–
encouraging for Pius IX.

Moreover, the circumstances are no longer the same. In the time of Pius VI, the Revolution had not yet clearly said its last word. One could, if need be, misunderstand her plans and believe that she would be satisfied with a partial usurpation. Today, such an illusion is no longer possible. **The Revolution does not only want a part of Saint Peter's domain, it wants it all: that is no longer a mystery.**

Moreover, the eminent Cardinal Antonelli points out, with good reason, that Pius VI was despoiled by violence, and that Pius IX was proposed to abdicate. Now, the pope has never abdicated: he neither can nor should. “If therefore,” he adds, “we consider the difference between the cases, we will easily see that the same motive which induced Pius VI to yield, obliges Pius IX to an absolute refusal.

“Pius VI, in circumstances completely different from the present ones, found himself **face to face with insurmountable violence and material force.** Pius IX, on the contrary, is grappling **with a principle** that we would like to make prevail. Now, material force is only a fact. By its nature it is limited and only makes itself felt within the circle of its action, which it cannot go beyond. It is quite otherwise with principles. By their nature they are universal and of an inexhaustible fecundity. They do not stop at the point to which one wishes to restrict their action, but they tend towards a general application.

“Thus Pius VI, by yielding to material force, could reasonably hope to save the rest of his States, while Pius IX, yielding to a pretended principle, would virtually abdicate the sovereignty of all his States, and authorize a spoliation against any principle of justice and reason. From this we can see that the example of Pius VI leads rather to a conclusion quite opposite to that which we have in view»1 .

You can now appreciate this much-hyped new fallacy; but of this one and of all the
others of the same kind, more complete justice must be done in favor of Catholics.

However, independently of all the reasons given, the very interest of society, threatened by communism
pagan, makes a special duty to Pius IX not to sanction anything that one dares against his temporal domain.

IN DEFENDING HIS RIGHTS, THE POPE DEFENDS ALL RIGHTS.

This is the point on which the question must be maintained. To say it in passing, to the shame of certain Catholics, more or less high in the social scale, this is what the Protestants of Mecklenburg very well understood and nobly expressed in their address to Pius IX.

We have already seen that by defending his independence the Holy Father is defending freedom. It remains to show that he **defends authority, property, all property, all rights, society itself, and that against barbarism.** To characterize what threatens us, I have no other word. If the one I use is too strong, you will soften it; but before you start looking for a synonym, listen to me.

Admit first, dear friend, that we are witnessing a strange spectacle. What is happening before our eyes? Two enemy forces are at grips: the Revolution and Catholicism. **What does the Revolution want? Inaugurate his law. What is it?**
It is the right of man reigning without dependence and without control of the authority of God; in other words, it is the law of force. What is the inauguration of the law of force? It is the triumph of barbarism; for the same right governs savages and wolves.

Now see where we are. Under heaven, a single man today defends true right, the right of justice, against revolutionary right. To safeguard it he devotes himself to outrages, to persecutions, to poverty, perhaps to martyrdom. Its cause is the cause of all, the cause of civilization. Doesn't it seem that the whole of Europe should unite around him and heroically support him with the triple power of his prayers, his gold and his blood?

Well ! Not only are we abandoning it; but still, far from taking his invincible energy into account, you hear millions of men of all countries, of all states and of all ranks blaming his conduct, taxing him with obstinacy,

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1 Dispatch of February 29, 1860, in reply to the circular of M. Thouvenel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of France.

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regulation and worldly ambition. It is thus that the highest social question is reduced to the petty proportions of a base interest. May God forgive them; because they don't know what they are saying!

They do not know that in defending Christian right against revolutionary right, the heroic Pius IX defends order against disorder, authority against anarchy, property against socialism, civilization against barbarism; the nobleman's castle, the banker's safe, the merchant's shop, the worker's savings bank, the ploughman's field, as well as the throne of kings, even that of Victor-Emmanuel. **All rights stand.** The palace and the cottage rest on the same foundation. The fire has no preference: with the same flight it consumes the wealthy neighborhoods and the suburbs.

Let it be recognized in principle that one can, under the pretext of convenience or national utility, expropriate, in defiance of all existing rights and all existing treaties, any prince whatsoever, even be he pope: before long not a throne will not stand still. A fortiori, no owner is safe. The principle that you invoke today against the Sovereign Pontiff, and that you claim to have him sanction, tomorrow the pitiless logic of democracy will turn it against yourselves: what will you have to answer?

That's what we don't want to understand: I should say **what we can no longer understand.** Such, in fact, is the impotence of logic and the weakening of common sense, even among a great number of honest people, that these elementary ideas pass twenty cubits above their heads. Among all the symptoms of the evil to which Europe is a prey, I know of none more alarming than this **weakness** or this **perversity of intelligence.**

When you see a man, groping around in the middle of noon, mistaking cars for porte-cocheres, calling white what is black, you say that this man is stricken with vertigo or madness. When I see a world giving me the same spectacle, how could I not say that it is on the borders of barbarism? What is madness for the individual is barbarism for peoples.

Be that as it may, for whoever retains the faculty of linking two ideas, the fall of the temporal throne of Saint Peter is, in the social order, the uncertainty of all rights, the shaking of all thrones, and the signal for a general debacle.
In the religious order, it is for the Church the entry into the most difficult phase of its existence, perhaps the return to the catacombs. For the nations which condemn their mother to this hard ordeal, it is the beginning of an unknown future, which the firmest gaze does not dare to contemplate.

With all due respect to the authors and approvers of spoliation, this fact, which we are trying to reduce to petty proportions, is pregnant with immense events which will shake Europe to its very foundations. We will come back to this later. In the meantime, I must speak to you of nearer dangers. The practical purpose of my letters demands it: these new dangers are **schism1 and persecution.**

All yours.

LETTER VIII.

DEAR

FRIEND, Four facts engender one another and are linked together by an **indissoluble bond of kinship. Despotism, spoliation of the Church, schism and persecution :** this is what we see in all periods of history. These facts are in the current situation. I'm not saying they'll come out of it, please notice; I'm just saying they're there. Now, facts are brothers only because ideas are brothers. Once established, the first thing that makes despotism, royal or popular, is to despoil the Church, its incorruptible rival. To impoverish it, in order to weaken it; weaken it, in order to hold it under his hand: nothing could be more logical. If the spoliation reaches the very head of the Church and strips him of his territorial independence: what will happen?

In the most favorable supposition, the word of the common Father becomes suspect. Well or ill founded, this suspicion is the **seed of schism.** I do not insist. Refer to what we have said of human liberty, the guarantee of which is also found in papal independence. If you want reasoning, read the oft-quoted reflections of Napoleon I.

One day the warrior was a theologian. He says: “The institution that maintains the Pope as guardian of Catholic unity is an admirable institution. This chief is reproached with being a foreign sovereign, and we must thank Heaven for it. What ! can we imagine in the same country such an authority, alongside the government of the State? United to the government, this authority would become the despotism of the sultans; separated, hostile perhaps, it would produce a frightful, intolerable rivalry. The Pope is out of Paris, and that is good. He is neither in Madrid nor in Vienna, and that is why we support his spiritual authority. In Vienna, in Madrid, we are justified in saying the same. We are therefore happy that the Pope resides outside his home, and that by residing outside his home, he does not reside among his rivals. I do not support these things by the stubbornness of a devotee, but by reason” (Reported by M. Thiers in the History of the Consulate).

How many misfortunes would Napoleon have saved himself if he had taken his own words as a rule of conduct! But no; it is in the nature of despotism to will more than it owes. Here comes the second supposition, more certain than the first and much more serious.

The Pope, deprived of his independence, finds himself in conflict with the prince whose guest or vassal he is. Without being preva ricant, he cannot grant what is asked of him: what will happen? To find the answer, you don't have to go far back in history.

Our century has seen a Pope of holy memory, a lamb in gentleness, but fortunately a lion in firmness. Stripped of his temporal domain, this Pope becomes the prisoner of the despoiler. To bend him to his unjust whims, there is no kind of pressure that Caesar does not exert on the Pontiff. Faced with seductions, threats, mistreatment, the Vicar of Jesus Christ wants to protest. We close his mouth. He wants to continue teaching and governing the Church. His word cannot reach the ears of the Catholic world. Abused by outrages, he was dragged from prison to prison; and, what

[1] Rating from LHR. The schism finally succeeded: it is the conciliar religion. Persecution will follow.

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is unexampled in the annals of ancient persecutions, for more than five years the government of the Church has been rendered completely impossible for him .

If the voice of truth was necessarily mute, that of error was not. Around the pontifical prison, attempts at schism were being pursued with such ardor and brilliancy which **brought the Church of France to the brink of its ruin.**
It was time for Providence to intervene. It did so, as in all similar cases, in a direct and sovereign manner. He who laughs at the advice of men and commands the elements is the same who said: “You are Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He remembered his word: you know the rest.

I hear you, dear friend; So you suppose, you tell me, that the schism is in the spirit of the situation?
Even in this hypothesis, do you believe it possible? To the first question you already know my answer. The situation is the daily growing reign of the Revolution. Now, **the Revolution** wants better than schism. Pius IX himself said it: she **wants the complete ruin of the Catholic religion,** catholicam religionem funditùs evertere. If she ever becomes absolute master of her actions, we will see the bottom of her mind.

As for the governments which are in league with it and which claim to say to it, as God himself said to the ocean: You will come so far, and forbid you to go further; let us not attribute to them, I will, any schismatic intention . But their dispositions, as good as they are today, are they enough to reassure us? Are men always masters of themselves and of events? Are we ignorant of the influence of opinions, the supposed necessities of circumstances, so often invoked in times of revolution?

Let's not get out of modern history. At its beginning the French Revolution, in a large number of its actors, did it want a preconceived will, **the schism of the Civil Constitution ?** It is quite permissible to doubt it. Nevertheless, the event took place. At the bottom of the schismatic act you can read the signature of the same men who once swore inviolable respect for the Catholic religion.

Your second question remains: would a schism be possible today? To warn Catholics, I
I could content myself with recalling the words of the Apostle: "There must be heresies"; let alone schisms.

It is one of the thousand trials reserved for the Church. In this respect, does our epoch enjoy any immunity? Does it not carry within itself any of the elements of this moral disease? **So what does it take to make a schism?**
Two things: a negation and an affirmation. A denial of faith and obedience to the Church, and an affirmation of ambition to be satisfied or of well-being to be preserved.

Is negation lacking these days? Look around you, and judge the tree by its fruits. **Where is the faith of the many? This square faith that nothing overthrows, this faith all in one piece, which is or which is not, and for which any reprobate or suspect concession is an apostasy?** One of the characteristics of our time, is it not the impatience of the yoke of religious authority? **Isn't it unfortunately too certain a fact that most minds seek to escape by some tangent from the orbit of simple and complete faith? Can indifference even to dogmatic truth be carried further?**

As an authentic expression of these alarming dispositions, do we not have equality before the law, **of yes and no in matters of belief :** an unprecedented phenomenon in the Christian world and which pagan Rome saw only in the days of its decadence? ? Do we not still have the quiet obstinacy of so many men of every condition and every dignity who, even today, respond with contempt and sarcasm to the wrath of the excommunication with which the Church has struck them? ?

Is it affirmation? Another distinctive characteristic of the present time, is it not the fever of pleasures?
For too many a portion of society, is life anything but a race for the steeple, for gold, dignities and pleasures? That the increase or simply the preservation of these goods, of which so many men have made their gods, depends on a disobedience to the Church, is it of course that the faith of the martyrs suddenly awakens in the hearts , to the point of making everyone prefer poverty to fortune, humiliation to honours? What answers the history of Germany, of England, of France itself and of all the countries, where schism has become the price of dignities and wealth? The two elements of schism are therefore not lacking.

Now, schism, in principle, is, at a given moment, persecution in practice: another danger of the situation. No more than anywhere else, we here accuse the intentions of no one, and our aim is in no way to cast chimerical anxieties into people's souls. We see only one fact : **the connection that exists between schism and persecution.**

However great the number of defectors and adorers of the fait accompli, the Church and her rights have always preserved, and always will preserve, **intrepid defenders.** The schismatic power that everywhere took charge of **transforming them into confessors of the faith and into martyrs.** This power wants to be obeyed by all, and at all costs. For him it's always a question of self-esteem and tranquility, often a question of life or death. Under these conditions, inherent in his nature, **he finds himself fatally drawn into breaking all resistance.**
So we cut off heads without scruple, because we cut them off on principle.

The French Revolution is further proof of this. After having solemnly decreed the liberty, equality, fraternity of all citizens, respect for religion and the inviolability of the king, it fell into schism. The next day we see her decree, with no less solemnity, the proscription of priests and Catholics, the massacres of the Vendée, the reign

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[1] Close custody... detained for five years and more, with all roads completely blocked, so that he could not rule the Church of God, without any similar case in the ancient annals. Brev.-Rom. May 24

[2] It was no doubt by surprise that the government published two days ago a pamphlet entitled: Emperor and Pope.
This pamphlet is a direct appeal to schism. Here is the summary: “Abolition of Roman influence, appointment of a Patriarch, ecumenical council of the French episcopate, universal vote applied to the clergy, the State, director of religious administration, abolition of concordats, constitution civilian of the clergy”. Is the trend clear enough?

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of terror and the murder of Louis XVI.

Under the first Empire, did we not see the persecution walking on a parallel line with the schismatic attempts of 1811? Do you want to go higher? Remember Germany and England in the sixteenth century. Read what the very lenient Emperor of Russia is doing today with regard to his Catholic subjects. Without going so far, see how the Italian revolution, which is only at its beginning, treats the faithful clergy in the usurped countries. How many religious hunted and despoiled! How many fugitive, exiled or imprisoned bishops!

But why prove the obvious? **In all times and in all countries, despotism, spoliation of the Church, schism and persecution are four correlative facts.** With the proscription of Christian law, the era of the Caesars begins again; and the era of the Caesars is inevitably the era of the martyrs. To this law, the history of the past offers no exception. Will the history of the present be happier? The future will answer.

All yours.

LETTER IX

DEAR

FRIEND, The dangers we have just pointed out are in the nature of the present situation, that is to say in the daily more complete triumph of the Revolution. Barring a miracle, **they will, one day or another, be terrible realities.** These realities will be everywhere where the Revolution will reign, and in the same proportion as the power of its reign. But the prospect of schism and persecution especially frightens Catholics. The others, and this is the large number, are relatively unaffected by it. Let them not reassure themselves too quickly. There are subjects of fear which are common to all. I mean **public calamities,** consequences of the situation.

Remember this: **everything that the Revolution has not done, it hates; everything she hates, she destroys. Give it absolute power today, and despite its protests, it will be tomorrow what it was yesterday, what it will always be: all-out war against religion, society, family, property. Evil God, she doesn't change, she can't change. Let her not say that she is being slandered: her actions betray her.** Remember 1793 and 1848. See what it was like in Italy in 1860.

With unparalleled audacity, it tramples on the double charter of the civilized world: religion and international law. She tears it up, she carries the bloody shreds of it on the end of her bayonets. **On its flags, it inscribes the right of revolt against all authority except its own; the right to oppress, expel, incarcerate whoever displeases him; the right to plunder all sovereigns, by plundering the most legitimate sovereign of all: and this right she practices.**

What is that if not **communism** on a large scale, a prelude to communism on a small scale? If, against all divine and human justice, kings are permitted to annex kingdoms to themselves, why should private individuals be forbidden to annex the portfolio, the house, the field of their neighbor?

What is most alarming is the attitude of nations in the face of such attacks. Europe is undermined, dismantled by a people of barbarians. Among the kings, some applaud; the others remain with arms in their arms. In vain the infallible oracle of truth, the Supreme Pontiff, tires of crying out that the Revolution has a grudge against all thrones, that society is heading towards communism, that is to say, to the ultimate limit of disorder and misfortune1 . The deaf do not hear, the blind do not see: official Europe is irritated or smiles. Honest people repeat: The triumph of the Revolution is impossible.

Thus have always reasoned guilty peoples and vulgar minds, on the eve of great catastrophes. “The world has never been more enlightened, the public fortune more prosperous, the army braver, the senate more faithful, the Emperor more powerful than today”; thus reasoned the Romans of the upper and lower empires; the first, a few years before the invasion of the Barbarians; the latter, at the very sight of Mahomet's fleets. To put it briefly, thus reasoned the sleepers at the time of our Estates General. They didn't see, or they didn't want to see, that 1793 was in 1789, like a chicken in the egg, and that all it took was a peck to hatch it.

As for me, dear friend, I admit that this peace of mind is far from reassuring me. It has never reassured the most clairvoyant minds. You have just heard the Holy Father. Listen to a few other observers. The spoliation of the temporal domain is the last blow dealt to the last root which, through property, attaches the Church to the soil of Europe. “Now, said M. de Bonald thirty years ago, it is all over with public religion in Europe, if it has no property; it's all over for Europe if it no longer has a public religion”. (Théor. du pov., t. III, p. 106).

In 1849, Donoso Cortès wrote to me: "I owe you a million thanks for your kindness in sending me a copy of the work in which you have so resolutely and so deeply probed the wounds of this dying society. (Where are we headed? A look at current trends). Reading it was for me extremely sad and delicious at the same time. Extremely sad, by the revelation of great and formidable catastrophes; delicious, by the sincere manifestation of the truth.

“My ideas and yours are almost identical in every way. God made flesh for rottenness and the knife for rotten flesh. We are touching **the greatest catastrophe in history.** For the moment, what I see most clearly is the barbarity of Europe and its depopulation before him. The land through which philosophical civilization has passed will be cursed. It will be the land of corruption and bloodshed. Then will come... what must come”.

From another point of view, the Emperor Napoleon I came to the same conclusion. He said more than forty ago years: "In fifty years Europe will be republican or Cossack". He would have said socialist if the word had existed.

Thus, invasion of barbarians from within or invasion of barbarians from without, perhaps both; locusts for Egypt; half-naked hordes for the Romans; weakness to humble strength; savage barbarism for

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1 It is easy to understand how much the crisis is compared to each government day by day, and how much they return to the whole civil society it will cause destruction, when the path is thus opened to fatal Communism. (Alloc., September 28, 1860.)

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punish learned barbarism: providential equation between crime and punishment. Who can answer, seeing what happens, that the inductions of logic, the analogies of history and the presentiments of genius are only dreams?

In the eyes of the most vulgar common sense, one thing is certain: the throne of Saint Peter, that is to say the full material independence of the Pope, is the only barrier in Europe against despotism and barbarism. This overturned throne, everything is to be feared; because everything becomes possible.

Add, my dear friend, that **for the Catholic THE REVOLUTION IS NOT A FACT, LIKE ANY OTHER FACT: IT IS A PUNISHMENT.** Our reasons for fear are less in what we see than in what we believe. As the magnet attracts the iron, the crime attracts the punishment. Between crime and punishment there is the same proportion as between cause and effect. **Only repentance can save the guilty.** These axioms of the moral world are for us more certain than the axioms of geometry.

Now take a look at a map of Europe. See if you find a baptized nation which for four centuries has not been guilty of schism, heresy, spoliation, atrocious persecutions, indifference and blasphemies without example and without name, in the history of the ages. previous. To strip the Church, to chain the Church, to slap the Church: do not these three words sum up, in its general relations, the life of these well-born daughters with regard to their mother? **In principle or in fact, all are guilty of permanent insurrection against Christianity. Are they repentant?** Question their deeds; listen to what is being said; see what happens.

In the presence of the supreme humiliation inflicted today on the Sovereign Pontiff, what is their conduct? what is their language? The second translates into the first. All of them say with assurance: “Whether the Pope's affairs are settled or not, it matters little. It is a purely temporal question, without any connection with the religious order, even less with the social order. Let the ultramontanes seek to give it proportions and a character which it does not have: no one will take it seriously. Sitting on the immortal principles of 1789, the foundations of modern society and of public prosperity are solid enough to have nothing to fear from this antiquated conflict between the temporal and the spiritual. Then, throwing a superb disdain on the past and an insolent **challenge to heaven,** they add: that the peoples needed Christianity and the Church; that the more they were subjected to them, the more the societies flourished. And we saw our good ancestors, trembling at the voice of the priests, not daring to be free without their permission; or, if they dared, condemned to public expiations. Those times of ignorance are over.

“As much as it has been in us, we have emancipated ourselves from the tutelage of Christianity. We have constituted ourselves outside of its laws and in opposition to the Church: we are far from repenting of this. What harm has happened to us? Since we have banished from our councils, He who is called the King of kings and since we make fun of the Church and its thunderbolts, **we have been progressing from progress to progress.** Never have we been more enlightened, freer, richer, stronger, more prosperous. What good is the Pope? What good is the Church? What good is Christianity? Our civilization, the most brilliant that ever was, is a solemn denial of the teachings of the past.

Is this the language of a penitent? However, **iniquity cannot escape supreme justice.** Patient because he is eternal, God can wait for the individual until the threshold of eternity. But there is no eternity for nations. Recompense or punishment, it is here below that eras receive their wages. Feast of Balthazar, the social triumph of pride and sensualism cannot last forever. **If it were otherwise, man would be stronger than God. The evil would have been in vain; and never would Satan have operated a prestige so capable of seducing the elect themselves.**

It is therefore true: an enormous mass of debts, contracted towards divine justice, threatens Europe with a terrible deadline. The only way to escape catastrophe would be to come to an agreement with the creditor and **humbly ask Him for a delay and for mercy.** In all likelihood, we won't. Far from returning to itself, the anti-Catholic portion, the most numerous and the most influential of society, will continue its sterile agitation, decorated with the name of politics and polemics. As in the past, she will indulge in her speculations, her pleasures, her life of movement and noise.

Intoxicated with the present and careless of the future, she will descend into the abyss to the sound of violins.

At least that part of society which, with faith, retains an understanding of the evil and the remedy, will lift up its hands to heaven and beg, by the double voice of prayer and almsgiving, mercy and wisdom from above. Will she save Europe?

Sixteen hundred years ago, the first Christians found themselves face to face with a world which was not yet Christian; who did not want to become one; who didn't want us to be; who pursued with his insults and his anger those who were.

Spread throughout the empire, **our fathers prayed night and day for the conversion of this obstinate and persecuting world.** “We invoke, they said, for the salvation of the emperors, the eternal, living and true God. We ask for them a long life, a peaceful reign, an unalterable peace, a faithful senate; we delay with all the power of our wishes the fall of the empire” (Tertull., Apol., c. XXX, etc.)

Never more fervent and more disinterested prayers. What was the result? **Roman society persisted in its path of hatred and contempt. There was for her neither a peaceful reign, nor an unalterable peace, nor a faithful senate. It marched from revolution to revolution, until the whole empire disappeared under the blows of the barbarians.**

In the nineteenth century, we, the sons of the martyrs, find ourselves in the presence of a world which ceases to be Christian; who does not want to become so again; who does not want us to be; who pursues with his sarcasm and his hatred those who are sarcasm, including the Pope himself. Will we be happier than our ancestors? Are we more fervent?

If the greatness of iniquity is measured by the price of the graces received, like the gravity of the fall from the height of which one falls: the world which has abused the blood of Calvary and eighteen centuries of benefits, is it less culpable than he who has been deprived of it?

All yours.

LETTER X

Dear Amy,

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If, in the counsels of Providence, it is no more given to us to save the present world, than to our fathers of Rome and Jerusalem to save the Jews and the Romans from the punishment so justly deserved, what will be the **issue** of the present great insurrection against God? How will this war, unexampled in the annals of baptized peoples, end? **As all the great struggles of evil against good have come to an end.**

When God has made His paternal word resound in vain, He makes His thunderbolt speak. If the stubbornly rebellious son need for correction; if the sins of the first Christians, however so Christian, were, according to the testimony of the Fathers, the has the cause of frightful storms, known under the name of **persecutions :** how can we believe that present-day Europe will return to order by a path of roses? The hardened man cries out **for mercy only in the hard embraces of adversity. To save an obstinate society in evil, what is needed? You need what some fear, what others hope for, what everyone foresees: you need the test.**

What will it be? Every trial contains a double mystery: **mystery of expiation and mystery of renewal.** The fire of the crucible consumes the alloy: the gold alone emerges shiny and pure. It is the same with the fire of tribulation. Thus ended, by a direct and sovereign action of the justice of God, the great epochs of evil, the antediluvian world and the pagan world. Thus began, by a direct and sovereign action of the mercy of God, the two great epochs of good, the patriarchal world and the Christian world.

Such is the test in its intimate nature. What will be, in relation to us, the one who is preparing? Faith, reason, the analogies of history give the same answer. **The future reserved for Europe is a catastrophe, proportionate to the evil which is the cause and of which it will be the punishment.** Politics, philosophy, literature, arts, education, industry, dance, music, evil, under the name of enlightenment and civilization, has invaded everything. It is everywhere, it is inveterate, it has resisted all remedies. By bearing today, in the face of the sun, a sacrilegious hand on the Father of the Christian world, he reaches his last limits.

The society in which he was incarnated, which made him the soul of his soul, the bone of his bones, the flesh of his flesh, signed his death warrant. **The catastrophe will be his tomb :** his fate is written in history. **Never has a society been rejuvenated,** let alone a world. The catastrophe of the deluge did not rejuvenate the antediluvian world: it swallowed it **up.** The invasion of the barbarians did not rejuvenate the Roman world: it made it **disappear.**

A large ruin : this is what appears in the foreground of the painting. To see it, there is no need for a telescope: the eye is enough. But behind this great ruin what do you see? Dear friend, I told you at the beginning: Friendship blinds you. You are wrong to address me. I am neither a prophet nor a son of a prophet. To answer you with confidence, it would have to be one or the other. The future is God's secret. When we want to probe it, we necessarily enter the realm of conjecture. So don't expect prophecies or quasi-prophecies from me: mere **conjectures,** that's all I have to offer you. Since you care about it, I send you some. While waiting for a surer light, may they illuminate a corner of this **future which tomorrow will be the present; of this future full of hope for some, of terror for others, of mystery for all!**

One of two things: either the Catholic element which, in the whole of Europe, will survive the catastrophe, **will suffice** to form by itself **a new order of things.** In this case, the ordeal will be followed by a period of social peace and triumph for the Church. The eye of man will see the most consoling of miracles. The Revolution having accomplished its work of destruction, smashed, burned, slaughtered, ransacked all that should be; his sons themselves, having, according to their custom, devoured one another: fear will become the beginning of wisdom.

Less culpable than the others, the popular classes which, in spite of their disorders and their indifference, have preserved the principles of the faith, will **turn to the Church and conjure her to save them.** It will be **the dawn of a new world.** Then, we will see that Providence never gropes. We will know that it is neither to be deserted dwellings, nor to become profane places, that so many thousands of churches have been repaired, enlarged or built over the past fifty years. In all eyes will shine the raison d'être of so many religious bodies, emerging as if by miracle from the bosom of a deeply corrupt society. The unknown activity of Catholic zeal and its wondrous creations will be self-explanatory. The bitter tears of the Church will be dried, and her long sorrows compensated by maternal joys, above all joys.

Mary will justify all the hopes of the Catholic world. Once more victorious over the infernal serpent, she will say why it has been reserved for our century and not for another to add to her crown the last and most beautiful jewel. Thus will be accomplished in all their extent the magnificent oracles of the prophets of the Old and New Testaments: oracles which, in the judgment of many, have hitherto been verified only in an incomplete manner.

Then God alone will be great on earth. Then His Christ shall reign from the east to the west, as Solomon dates the fulness of peace. Then there will be only one fold and one pastor : unum ovile and unus Pastor.

Either the Catholic element that will remain in Europe will be **too weak** to form a new society on its own. So, if the West is not to become a cursed and lonely land, like Judea, after the passage of Nebuchadnezzar, **new blood** will be infused into the veins of its few inhabitants. Europe will see what Napoleon I said .

Came from who knows where, led by a few improvised leaders, of whom Providence made heroes, whom history calls Attila, Genseric, Tamerlane, and who are called themselves the scourge of God, the rod of **kings** and the terror of the world, these sons of the desert will come, like their ancestors, **to bow their heads under the hand of Catholicism. From this Christian element will come a new Europe.**

However strange it may appear at first glance, this solution will not arouse the smile of any serious mind. In the East, mysterious presentiments announce it; in the West, it has been the concern of the deepest thinkers for more than eighty years. Lack of space prevents me from citing the proofs.

In both of its parts, the disjunctive that I have just explained, supposes that humanity is far from having accomplished its destinies on earth. If we admit, with some, that the end of time is approaching: here is what awaits us. Despite the ordeal, Europe will not convert. The triumphant Revolution will continue to extend its conquests and strengthen its reign. Social decomposition, which had become deeper than in the days of the Lower Empire, would end up making

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modern world a **living corpse.** In order to maintain in a state of aggregation the social elements, always ready to dissolve, **the harshest despotism** that has ever been seen **will weigh on the world. The war of man against God will assume more and more general proportions. This war will be led by a new anti-Christian empire more formidable than those that preceded it.**

If the hypothesis in which I am reasoning is true, this empire is already out of the cradle. Allow me, dear friend, to explain my thoughts to you. You know that it is in the destinies of the Church to always have in mind **a great enemy empire.** The reason is in the existence of the two cities, the City of Good and the City of Evil, both of which are imperishable. Descending from the Cenacle, the Church, or the City of Good, found the Roman Empire, against which it had to fight for five or six centuries. The fallen Roman Empire, the fight does not end. The bleeding limbs of the colossus still lie on the soil of the West, that at the extremity of the East rises a new anti-Christian empire, no less extensive, no less cruel and more durable than that of the Caesars. The empire of Mahomet persecutes the Church, and holds it in check during nearly twelve hundred years. He is today in the convulsions of agony.

If we enter the period of the last struggles, the Church, as it is divinely foretold, must expect, and we with her, new **and more terrible combats.** With the possible exception of a few truces of short duration and more apparent than real, the war will continue on all points of the globe, for the Church will never cease to be Catholic. It will become more and more relentless, until the appearance of the one who, by personifying it, will be the highest expression of evil, **the Antichrist** par excellence.

His reign will be the time of these formidable struggles which will endanger the very salvation of the predestined. Like all great epochs of evil, it **will end with a direct and sovereign action of God.** He to whom all power has been given in heaven and on earth **will come to the aid of the truth ;** and, after having killed the man of sin with the breath of His mouth, He will take with Him the Church, His bride, into the abode of eternal peace. Thus will the world end.

Whatever these alternatives may be, one thing remains indisputable. In the midst of the perplexities of the present and the uncertainties of the future, **grave duties are imposed on Catholics.** I will tell you about it in my first letter.

All yours.

HOMEWORK

LETTER XI

DEAR

FRIEND, The duties of Catholics flow from the very notion of the Church. They are measured by the seriousness of current circumstances, which determine their nature. What is the Church? In all the rigor of the word, the Church is our mother, the mother of civilized nations. It is she who begot us to supernatural life, and as a consequence, to the light, to the freedom, to the well-being which raises the Christian peoples so strongly above the pagans of old and the idolaters of today. of today. Boldly offer a bounty, a patent of invention, a statue in the Pantheon of his choice, to the man who will discover true liberty, a ray of pure light, real progress, a wholly useful institution, a truly tall and truly beautiful, **which does not come from the Church.**

It is she who pulled the world out of barbarism and who prevents it from falling back into it. To ward off a new fall of humanity, she has, for eighteen centuries, shed in torrents her purest blood. Vigils, tears, prayers, fatigue, humiliation, constantly recurring struggles: **she devoted herself to everything in the interest of her sons.** It is little for it to save our goods from time, it leads us to the possession of future goods.

However, this mother, so often our mother, is today **drowned in pain.** Since she traveled through the Valley of Tears, she has never been able to say with so much truth: O all you who pass through the path of life, Catholics of the nineteenth century, seek in the history of the past, and see if there is a pain comparable to mine!

In the presence of this **new Calvary,** what must we be? A son sees his mother outraged; he sees her insulting, stifling, stripping, brutally driving her from her home. What is his first feeling, his first duty? His heart speaks, his blood boils. He is half, and even more, in the pains of the one he loves more than himself. **Everything he can try to defend her, he does.**

To associate ourselves with the evils of the Church, to defend the Church : these, Catholics, are our first two duties. Nature dictates them, faith commands them. But what is to associate oneself with the evils of the Church? It's looking, it's feeling what we do to him, as done to ourselves. His pains must be our pains. They must occupy our thoughts, nourish our conversations, inspire our prayers. Our heart must bleed at the wounds we inflict upon it; our cheeks blush at the slaps we give him; our soul grows indignant at the calumnies with which it is pursued; our eyes weep at the humiliations with which he is showered and at the tears that are made to shed him: Opprobria exprobrantium tibi ceciderunt super me.

If it were otherwise, where would our filial piety be towards the Church? Shame on him who can read with indifference the daily account of his anguish; to him whose life a veil of mourning does not cover; to him who, in these moments of supreme sorrow, has no **horror of celebrations and worldly pleasures. The son who laughs and sings beside a weeping mother, was he ever a good son?**

This **compassion** should not be sterile. If she expires on the lips, who will take her seriously? By the fruits we know the tree: **by acts alone we know the reality of a feeling.** The acts of our compassion for the Church must vary according to persons and circumstances. The Church is poor. You are rich: give him your gold.

You are poor yourselves: share your bread with her. The Church is attacked with weapons in hand. Generous blood runs through your veins: offer your blood to it. **The Church is unworthily calumniated. You have a voice: speak; a pen, write in his defense.** The Church is abandoned, betrayed by those who call themselves her devoted sons: her trust is in God alone. **Hasten by your prayers help from above.** May our motto be the word of Tertullian: **"TODAY EVERY CATHOLIC MUST BE A SOLDIER :** In his omnis homo, miles".

In this forced, inevitable struggle, if the **sword of zeal must** arm the arm of the Catholic, the **shield of faith must**

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cover his head. It is a **new duty** imposed on him. What do I mean by that, my dear friend? I mean that the Catholic must above all provide for his own safety, so as never to sadden the Church, by becoming himself the victim of error and sophism. For that what should he do? **Know precisely what is true and what is false in the current question; consequently what he must support or fight, so as never to make suspicious concessions: a sad prelude to deplorable defections.**

As the Revolution equally attacks society and the Church, it has sophisms in the service of this double iniquity. Volumes would suffice neither to contain them nor, a fortiori, to refute them in detail. If he wishes to preserve himself from the inflamed darts of the enemy, the Catholic must take as an **immutable rule of conduct and word** these eternal maxims: 1. He who voluntarily

exposes himself to danger perishes therein. Bad speech devours like cancer.

The Catholic must therefore carefully avoid conversations and readings capable of distorting his mind on the events of the day. Let him especially mistrust the newspapers, those great corrupters of the moral sense and of the public conscience. Man is the son of his education, they used to say; and it was true. The man is the son of his newspaper, we can say today; and out of a hundred readers, this is true of eighty.

2° In political matters, the duty of the Catholic is to know and to say: **Might does not constitute right; Success justifies nothing; Devotion which succumbs to a just cause is glory; The betrayal that triumphs is shame; God scoffs at the advice of men; His justice has lightning returns; To attack Pierre is to attack the Immuable.** The kings who do it, say the divine oracles, plant nails in the eyes and swords in the loins.

3° **In religious matters, every Catholic, man, woman, child, must know by heart and support these axioms of faith and common sense:**

Stripping the Holy Father of his estates is not a purely temporal and morally indifferent question. Of to plunder someone unjustly, even a pope, is **to steal. However, theft is indeed a religious matter.**

To deprive the Holy See of its material independence is to lead the Church to schism and the Pope to martyrdom. For the one whose word must command faith in the universe, there are only two places in this world: the throne or the scaffold.

To say that we have the right to despoil the Pope for public utility is to proclaim the legitimacy of the right of force, inaugurate communism and prepare its triumph.

"To deny the necessity, the usefulness of the temporal possessions of the Church, to approve of the spoliations of which she is the victim, to blame the resistance which she opposes to the advice of some, to the violence of others, not to worry in any way about her ana themes, even to imagine that one's thunderbolts do not reach in these matters, is to be very culpable before God and very worthy of the most severe penalties: since this is to approve what the Church reproves, to support doctrines which 'she condemns, exonerate acts she stigmatizes'.

To claim that the Pope stripped of his temporal will be more respected and better obeyed: it is to play the role of the highwayman who says to the traveler: My friend, if I rob you, it is in your interest. When you walk barefoot, you will be much more esteemed; and when I have relieved you of everything you are carrying, you will be much freer.

But we will make a pension to the Pope! Boarding bread, ammunition bread; bread of ammunition, bread of submission; bread of submission, bread of tears and gravel.

To believe that concessions and reforms would have saved the Pope: that is the food of the flycatchers. The Revolution said it: **“A single concession, a single reform can satisfy me: it is the full and complete destruction of the temporal government of the Church”.** (Textual words of the Italian Revolutionaries. See the already quoted despatch of Cardinal Antonelli).

By defending his States, it is not a piece of land that the Pope is defending, it is the right from all points of view: social right, right of sovereignty, right of property.

These great principles will suffice for the Catholic to do justice to the sophisms, as numerous as they are stupid, with which we are assailed, like a swarm of furious wasps.

We have pointed out a **second danger: it is schism.** There are two ways to avoid it: one negative and the other positive.

The first consists in **repudiating, whatever his title and his patrons, any opinion contrary to the spirit of the Apostolic See, to Roman doctrines, to the personal infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ and to his supreme authority in all the world. 'Church ; in a word, any opinion that would tend to legitimize insubordination to the Holy Father, to any degree and on any point whatsoever :** or, as many are not ashamed to say: emancipation from the demands of the court of Rome.

The second consists in taking as **an invariable compass,** the words of Saint Ambrose: Ubi Petrus, ibi Ecclesia: **Where is the Pope, there is the Church.** Raise your gaze above all heads, and even above all mitres, to fix them on the Tiara; to know what the Holy Father thinks, and to think like him, neither more nor less; approve what he approves; condemn what he condemns; do what he commands with the docility of a child: here, my friend, is the infallible secret of remaining in the path of truth and in the bosom of the Church.

Shall I speak of persecution, that other trial to which we may be subject? Let the Catholic reread the annals of his heroic ancestors, or the contemporary history of his brothers in the Far East. Together they will teach him both the **precautions** he can take to escape his enemies, and the **resignation** with which he must suffer the loss of his possessions, and the **sublime calm** with which he must pay homage to the truth, live in prisons or in exile, to wear the chains of the confessor and to endure the torments of martyrdom.

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These noble examples, given by men of all ages and conditions, by weak women and by shy virgins, will inflame his courage and make him say: Why could I not do what so many others could?

Astonished by so much heroism in fragile beings like himself, he will understand that **martyrdom is a grace, the greatest of all and the reward for long fidelity.** If need be, to be reconciled seriously with God, to regulate one's temporal affairs, to show oneself **scrupulously faithful to small things,** in order to deserve to be faithful in large ones; above all, to feed often on the Eucharist, the bread of the strong, the wine of virgins, without which, in the judgment of the first Christians, martyrdom was impossible: such are the means for Catholics to always be, as Tertullian said, a race **ready to die,** expeditum morti genus.

If we are not worthy of providing the bloody career of persecution, other hardships await us. **Public calamities, social upheavals, anguish of more than one kind are inevitable.** To make them meritorious to the Catholic, two virtues will compose his armour: **patience and charity.**

Patient, he will say to himself: I need expiation. What are the pains of this life compared to the joys and rewards of the other? Looking in turn at the ancient patriarch of pain, he will say like Job: “The Lord gave him to me, the Lord took him away from me; He did what He saw fit, blessed be His name”; and on the great Victim of the world, he will say with the divine Model: “Father, if it is possible, let this chalice move away from My lips; however Thy will be done and not Mine”.

Charitable, he will look at creatures not as the cause of his sufferings, but as the instruments of Providence which strikes to purify or embellish. In his memory will return the Gospel precept: "Pray for those who persecute you". On his lips will be the words of the expiring Master: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." A worthy son of his ancestors, he imitated the first Christians who, far from hating their persecutors, prayed night and day for them and **obeyed them in everything that God does not forbid.**

However, like them again, he will be able **to brand evil with energy,** and **to name the wicked by their name.**

Didn't the divine Master whose tender prayer we have just read call his persecutors, cruel wolves, lupi rapa ces, white sepulchers, sepulcra dealbata, son of Satan, a palpe diabolo? Did not his precursor call the incredulous Jews a race of vipers, genimina viperarum? For Tertullian, does not the name of Nero signify all crimes?
And for Lactante, wasn't Decius an execrable animal, execrabile animal Decius? Harsh as they are, these qualifications can shock only those who deserve them, or those who disregard the rights of zeal, because they ignore those of truth.

By using these necessary precautions, the Catholic provides for his safety. He combats evil in its manifestations and in its effects. But it's not enough ; it must be attacked in its cause : another duty of which I will soon speak to you.

All yours.

LETTER XII

DEAR

FRIEND, Less than a year ago, a writing appeared with the aim of legitimizing the spoliation of the patrimony of Saint Peter, or, what is more insulting, of leaving to the Vicar of Jesus Christ only a derisory scepter . This writing is without an author's name. Through the organ of its leader, the Christian world has declared it: "a signal monument of hypocrisy, and an ignoble tissue of contradictions." Thus, intrinsic value and extrinsic value, it lacks everything. Nevertheless, this eighty-page pamphlet set Europe in turmoil. More than two hundred writers, French and foreign, priests and bishops, have thought it their duty to refute it.

Such a big effect for such a small cause! There is a mystery there. You will perhaps judge, my dear friend, that it would have been good to notice this and to ask yourself how it is that a writing, absurd in itself and impossible at other times, had such a resounding ; how it is that the Christian sense seems so weakened in Europe, that one had to fear the seduction of a great number, if one were not in a hurry to prove that the night is not the day.

So we set to work; and to be fair, the defense went further than the attack. In the brochure we saw something other than the brochure itself. Under the mask of the anonymous, we recognized, not the author whoever he is, nor the personal thought of an isolated man, but a formidable power, against which it seemed necessary to resort to this great deployment of strength. We were not mistaken. Taken literally, the pamphlet was refuted in all languages. In the eyes of Europe it is, if you will, demolished, pulverized.

Is it the same with occult power, of which it is regarded as the program and the trial balloon? Have we said its nature, its origin, the secret of its strength, the means of conquering it? The eloquent phrases, the peremptory arguments, directed against the daughter, have they killed the mother? Did they convert her, arrest her? See what's been happening in Europe for a year. Did they even light it up? This slim result is more than doubtful.

What have we done? It has been proved, demonstrated to the evidence of an axiom of geometry, that the territorial independence of the Holy See is necessary for the free exercise of its spiritual authority;

That the head of two hundred million Catholics, spread over all parts of the world, cannot be the guest, even less the pensioner or the vassal of any king whatsoever;

That the temporal power of the Pope is the most ancient, the most sacred, the most paternal, the most useful, the most legitimate of all existing powers;

That the laws of the Papal State are no more opposed, perhaps much less, to real improvements and liberties than the laws of certain countries which claim to be at the head of civilization; That to violate the right of

property and sovereignty in the person of the Holy Father is to violate it in the person of all landlords and all sovereigns; shake all the thrones; **to prepare the way for democracy,** by realizing on one point the anarchic dream which it promises to realize everywhere; **finally committing an act of insanity and felony which puts everything in danger, the social order even more than the religious order.**

This, my dear friend, is what has been proven without reply, in the refutations of the pamphlet and other writings of the

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same kind. It was a duty to do it, this duty was nobly fulfilled. The strong have been better armed, the weak fortified, a few defectors perhaps enlightened and rallied: all put on their guard.

But what about the power against which one reasoned? Supposed that she needed it, we confirmed her in her way of seeing, by demonstrating that she saw well; for all that we have taken so much pains to prove, she knows. She has known it for a long time; she knows it better than anyone. It is because she knows it that she wants it, and with a will that has not been stopped, and it is permissible to fear it, that the refutations, nor the cries of alarm will never stop, nor the protestations of justice and common sense.

Let us even suppose that it has been made hesitant and that for a moment it suspends its progress or slows it down: this power will exist no less. **Now, as long as it exists, it will be a perpetual threat to the Church, to the State, to all interests. Thus, I repeat, we have attacked evil in its manifestations, and we have done well. But that's not enough: IT MUST BE ATTACKED IN HIS CAUSE.** What is the use of cutting the branches of a poisoned tree, if you leave the trunk and the roots?

The doctor who says to the patient: Your condition is serious, very serious; death may result; who proves it to the evidence, and who withdraws without indicating either the nature of the evil, or the cause, or the remedy: this physician, were he a member of all the academies, doctor of all the universities, does not improve the patient's condition.

What else have we done? Words of eloquent indignation have fallen from the pens of the ablest writers, from the lips of the greatest orators. They have imprinted burning stigmata on the foreheads of the men who today upset the social order, who, to achieve their goal, also trample divine and human laws underfoot; and, without blushing, ingratitude, hypocrisy, cowardice are their auxiliaries and their accomplices.

But what ? Isn't this stopping at the surfaces, without penetrating the bottom? Isn't this taking the effect for the cause, and the tool for the hand that makes it work? The Revolution looks on all this with pity and says to us: “You misplace your blows. In 1793, I was neither Marat, nor Robespierre, nor Babeuf; today, I am neither Victor-Emmanuel, nor Garibaldi, nor Mazzini, nor Kossuth, nor any of their avowed or secret accomplices. **These men are my sons and my soldiers: they are not me. These men are passing manifestations, I am a permanent state. They are facts, I am a principle”.**

The men of the Revolution have therefore been energetically stigmatized. Once again I will say it: We did well. But again, my dear friend, this is not enough. What, then, must be done, and what is the most imperious duty of Catholics, in the solemn circumstances in which we find ourselves? Tell me: if one day you saw your children, yesterday still brilliant in health, become pale and languid, what would you do? Surely you would seek **the cause** of this painful change. Such would be your first thought; for that would be your **first duty. The cause of the evil known, you would run to the remedy.**

The great duty of Catholics is to imitate you. Let them **examine,** seriously and without bias, before God and before history, how Europe, once so Christian, went out of its way to end in the abyss; what exactly is the first and ever active cause of this fatal aberration. **This known cause, we must arm ourselves with the unshakable will to destroy it.**

Now, as you know, there was a time in the life of Europe when, despite original sin and its inevitable consequences, the whole social order rested on Christianity. Ideas, laws, institutions, arts, festivals, language: Christianity penetrated everything with its spirit, imprinted its stamp on everything.

It is a fact.

All the positions that Christianity occupied, a new master occupies them today. He reigns in ideas, in laws, in institutions, in the arts, in festivals, in language.

That's another fact.

What is the cause of this double phenomenon? First of all, who is this new Master, this audacious **Usurper** who pushes Christianity the sword in the loins, who holds society by the throat and who threatens to suffocate it, by cutting off the breath of faith? If he refuses to name himself, know him by his works. Closely examined, present-day Europe, the Europe over which he reigns, is neither Lutheran nor Calvinist; she is neither Protestant, nor Jewish, nor Mahometan: she is something more, or, if you like, something less. What is this plus or this minus?

Of itself it is defined by its great characters. In the days of the nascent Church, Satan reigned fully over the world. His reign was summed up in a triple apotheosis.

Apotheosis of reason. No more fixed beliefs; universal contradictions; equality of all religions before the law; admission of all the gods to the same Pantheon; perpetual mockery of the faith, customs, customs and traditions of the ancestors.

Apotheosis of the flesh. Universal worship of the senses by the luxury of clothing, lodging, food and all kinds of pleasures; by a very advanced material civilization put at the service of all concupiscences; by literature and poetry, by the theaters and by the arts, singing, glorifying, reproducing in marble, in bronze, in statues and in paintings, all the infamies of gods and men, placing them with honor in palaces, on public places, in gardens, in private houses, on walls, on ceilings, on the ground and everywhere.

Apotheosis of the will. Above, all temporal and spiritual power, concentrated in a man reigning according to his whims, without control in heaven or on earth. Below, the servile adoration of the Divus Imperator. Everywhere hatred of Christianity, proclaimer of the rights of God and principle of liberty; hatred of the Christian, servant of God and apostle of freedom; hatred of Christianity and of the Christian, revealing itself by insult, by calumny and reaching the point of carnage.

Such was, in its great characters, **the reign of Satan over the pagan world,** in the last days of his existence.

Take up, dear friend, each of its characters. Study them carefully, and see if the history of the Christian nations offers a single epoch, ours excepted, in which this triple apotheosis reappeared, with its great manifestations. What is all this? If not **the old paganism, returned to the world,** and which lacks to be complete only the plastic form. Unless you voluntarily close your eyes to the light, there is no mistaking it:

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the Usurper whom we have to fight is the same one whom nascent Christianity found king and god of this world. For us, as for our first fathers, the real struggle is not against men of flesh and blood, but against the powers of the air, against the spirits of evil, who have once again become the rulers of this world of darkness.

That said, what is the **nature of the war** that we have to support? Obviously this is **an anti-pagan reaction.** Any other war is blind, sterile, unhappy. The invasion of paganism is universal, incessant.

The reaction must be universal, incessant. Such is the great, the unique necessity of our time. Society can live without railways, without electric telegraphs, without newspapers, without rifled guns, and even without legislative Chambers, silent or speaking; but at the point where it is, it can no more do without an anti-pagan reaction than bread to feed itself or air to breathe. For her, it is literally a matter of life or death.

It now remains to be seen **by what mystery** the ancient tyrant of humanity finds himself, after a thousand years of expulsion, all alive and all powerful within the Christian nations?

This question will be the subject of my first letter.

All yours.

LETTER XII

DEAR

FRIEND, To know how the devil, driven out of his empire by the Son of God, found **a way to return there and to regain an authority almost as absolute as before,** is the **CAPITAL DUTY** of Catholics today. today. On this **knowledge** depends all the success of the struggle. How to acquire it? By questioning academics, scholars, scholars? No. Who ? The first good woman you will meet; your porter, a ploughman, some kind of blouse, endowed with the elementary faculty of linking two ideas.

Ask them: How does a field get covered with weeds? Unless they take your question for a joke, they will answer you: A field is covered with weeds, because we have sown there weeds. Tell them: I have traveled to a country called Germany; this country is Lutheran. Do you know why they profess Lutheranism and not some other heresy? They will answer you again: Lutheranism is professed in Germany, because Lutheranism was **taught** there. You add: I visited a country which professes a completely different religion: this country is called Turkey: it is Mohammedan: why? They will always answer you: Turkey professes Mohammedanism, because Mohammedanism has been **taught** there.

In these answers of the most vulgar common sense, is the one that we seek and that all must seek with us.
One asks how paganism or Satanism, for they are all one, finds itself today in full bloom in the field of Europe? We boldly respond with all the good women of France and Navarre: Europe today is pagan, because **paganism has been sown.** All the axioms of mathematics are less certain than this answer of ignorance.

That in terms of ideas, mores, arts, politics, social tendencies, present-day Europe is already half paganized; that the Revolution which dominates it has the aim of leading us back to the splendours, the glories, the freedoms of ancient times, that is to say pagan times, we see it with our eyes, we touch it with our hands, and Pius IX proclaims it to the face of the world.

How are the seeds of good and evil, of truth and error, made within societies? **By teaching.** The soul which comes into the world, says Saint Thomas, is a clean slate, tabula rasa. If you write Christianity there, it will be Christian; if you write paganism, Judaism, Mohammedanism in it, it will be pagan, Jewish, Mohammedan. If you write Christianity and paganism in it simultaneously, it will be half Christian and half pagan, until, with the aid of the passions, it will be nothing at all, or quite pagan. So, good or bad, Christian or pagan, Jew or Mohammedan, **MAN IS A TEACHER BEING: he is just that.**

At what epoch is given the teaching whose fruits are the most abundant and the most lasting? At the time when the soul of man, still new, receives with ease and retains with fidelity all that is entrusted to it. It is the period of **ten to twenty years,** rightly called by the Holy Spirit Himself, **the decisive time of life :** adolescens (and not puer) juxta viam suam What are the classes of society that even when he is old, he will not depart from her.

transmit to others what they have received through teaching and who make them in their image? A man who knows about it, M. Thiers, replied: “Secondary education forms what are called the enlightened classes of a nation. Now, if the enlightened classes are not the whole nation, they characterize it. Their vices, their qualities, their good and bad inclinations, are soon those of the entire nation: they make the people themselves.
even by the contagion of their ideas and feelings.

From what precedes results this unassailable consequence: **paganism abounds in Europe, because it was sown abundantly in the hearts of educated youth.**

If you wish to know when, how and by whom this was done, you are not asking me for a letter, it is a book (This book exists, it is **THE REVOLUTION, 12 vol.,** by the even **Bishop Gaume).**

But how did paganism spread to defile, or grow, like cancer, to eat away
to the vital parts of Christian societies?

In other words: How does the ancient prince of this world, returning victorious to his empire, march today at the head of a powerful army, on his ancient capital, of which he hopes, not without reason? , soon to see the doors open in front of him?

We read in the history of an ancient people, that a king of the country was dethroned and banished in perpetuity. He deserved it. He was a usurper, a libertine, a hypocrite, a despot without faith or law. Everyone applauded the revolution, and swore that the tyrant would never set foot in the empire again. The legitimate prince, endowed with all the qualities, had remounted the throne and made his subjects happy.

No one was thinking of the exile anymore, when one day certain lovers of artistic and literary curiosities found, in

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clearing away ruins, statues and manuscripts that dated from his reign. They recognized them to be the work of artists and writers, courtiers of the despot and no less corrupt than he. Among the statues, some represented him with the attributes of strength, courage, wisdom; the others, his exploits and even his most criminal actions. Many reproduced the members of his infamous and very numerous family, as well as the accomplices of his iniquities, even in the most voluptuous attitudes.

All these statues were judged with favour. They were found to be of exquisite workmanship. Only old people claimed that what offends modesty is not beautiful either morally or physically. Old people were treated as dotards, saying that sensation is the criterion of beauty, and that beauty is what pleases the senses. Now, as the liveliest sensations are those of flesh and voluptuousness, it was admitted that bare flesh is the type and the source of beauty. It was proposed to the king to keep them, simply as works of art. He let it be. These statues were therefore placed **in the royal palaces and in the princely dwellings.**

The manuscripts were no less admired than the statues. They were solemnly declared to be inimitable masterpieces of taste and style; treasures of philosophy, poetry and eloquence, that there alone was to be found in all its purity the national language. All these works, it is true, sang of the glories of the tyrant, the grandeur and prosperity of his reign; but the king was given to understand that there was no harm in keeping them as models of literature.

It was added: By purging them of certain obscenities, they can, not only without danger, but also with advantage, be placed in the hands of youth. Under the direction of virtuous masters devoted to the monarchy, it will only take form and repudiate substance. The elders shook their heads, **but the prince let it go.**

While legions of young artists copied the statues of the tyrant, with which private houses, gardens, and public squares were peopled, other legions of scholars studied with ardor the monuments of his reign. It must be said, the most respectable men in the kingdom were in charge of education. Until then their teaching, written or spoken, had aimed to glorify, as it deserved, the legitimate prince, by bringing out his qualities and his good deeds.

When they had to explain the new books, these conscientious masters did not fail to say to their pupils: “The usurper was a wretch, a scoundrel. His artists and writers were no better than he. But you have to admit, they were geniuses of the first order. The reign of the tyrant they sang of and under which they lived was, in many respects, the most brilliant epoch in our national history. It is then that we see a whole pleiad of great men of all kinds arise, the strongest institutions are founded, the most masculine characters appear, the most heroic virtues shine. It is very regrettable that the reign of our legitimate princes has produced nothing comparable, especially in poetry, eloquence, and the fine arts. In telling you this, we are fulfilling a painful duty; but you have a right to the truth”.

These excellent masters taught all these things with the best faith in the world, to the point of treating as barbarians those who dared to maintain the contrary. The children heard these praises every day for ten years. All knew by heart the life of the tyrant and the glories of his reign. One of their great occupations was to repeat them in verse and prose. To identify them with the ideas, customs and men of that time, they were taught to represent them on the stage: which they did to the applause of many spectators.

Always devoted to the legitimate prince, the masters took care to repeat to them, at least once a week, that they should indeed thank God for the expulsion of the tyrant and the cessation of his reign. The youth, torn in opposite directions, accepted the praise and considered the reservations. As she only knew by hearsay the crimes of the usurper, she thought that perhaps he had been slandered; that, in any case, a reign so fruitful in masterpieces and great men was not so sad as was said. This opinion spread imperceptibly among the people, already familiar with the past through statues, works of art, theaters and books.

We were there, when suddenly the tyrant appears on the frontiers. He issues a proclamation in which, recalling all the glories of his reign, he announces that he is coming to bring back the enlightenment, the sciences, the arts, the brilliant civilization, of which the monuments still made, in spite of the calumnies of his enemies, universal admiration. At the head of the army, the legitimate king marches against the usurper. The army betrays. The youth acclaim the tyrant. Cities open their doors to him. He returns to the throne, while the legitimate sovereign, accompanied by a small number of loyal subjects, sadly resumes the path of exile.

If I'm not mistaken, dear friend, this old story pretty much explains the how you're looking for. Meditate on it, have your neighbors read it. Tell them, a hundred times a day if necessary, that **teaching is sowing, and that we inevitably reap what we sow.** In order to apply this truth to present circumstances, you may add the following aphorisms:

The Revolution is a principle, an idea, a set of ideas.

The transmission of a principle, an idea, a set of ideas is done through teaching. It is therefore the lineage, taken in its broadest sense, which made the Revolution.

What teaching has done, teaching alone can undo.

Catholicism alone is the adequate negation of the Revolution.

If Europe has a future of peace and happiness, it will owe it TO CATHOLICISM APPLIED TO EVERYTHING, more intimately than ever.

It would be puerile to pretend to apply Catholicism intimately to society, by continuing a system of teaching which, if it did not apply paganism to Europe, at least did not prevent it from being applied to it. to the point of gritting her to the bone and driving her to agony.

If Catholics take these elementary truths seriously, if they make them the invariable rule of their conduct, they will have fulfilled the greatest of the duties imposed by circumstances. I know **it is late** for this as for the rest. If, instead of being dismissed as a useless, dangerous, untimely debate, the capital question of paganism in

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the education of Christian peoples had been, when it occurred, taken seriously and the reform resolutely applied, would we be where we are?

How many errors would have been prevented, false admiration extinguished, true ideas sown in society, in other words, how many elements of restoration prepared! In the cataclysm that everyone fears, we would see a lifeline that we lack. Already we would see rising, to serve as a fulcrum for the shaken order and as a waiting stone for the future, a generation very different from that which, in the name of pagan memories, is upsetting the world today. Italy and, in the absence of hymns to Jupiter, went to the churches of Rome to sing Te Deums in honor of Mazzini and Garibaldi.

Either way, **it's always time to repent and always beautiful to embrace the truth when you know it. From all points of view, salvation is at this price: Veritas liberabit vos.**

All yours.

CONSOLATIONS

LETTER XIV

DEAR

FRIEND, You are worried about how I can justify the title of my letter. To speak of consolation to Catholics, when everything seems to them a subject of deep sadness, seems difficult to you. In any case, you fear that the announced joys are more imaginary than real. Judge for yourself. Just remember, on the tribunal where you are going to sit, that you are a Catholic and that I am addressing Catholics.

No matter what the anthropologists are saying today, man is something other than a brute. He does not live on coarse food alone; **he lives on truth** Truth is for him his bread, his wine, his life, his treasure. From the cradle to the grave, he asks for her, he seeks her. Happy if he possesses it; unhappy and desperate, if he dies without having found it. This is why the first happiness of the saints in heaven is to contemplate **God, the very truth,** in all the brightness of His light; and **man's first consolation here is to see the truth** as clearly as his earthly condition permits. The truths which have the privilege of procuring him the sweetest consolations are religious truths. There are three in particular that I am going to point out to you.

The first, that God is infallible in His words. The second, that human society is not left to chance. The third, that the Catholic Church is indeed the unique spouse, always faithful and always fruitful of the God of Calvary.

Why do I say that these truths are consoling above all? Because **the Christian who has them can do without all the rest.** They are his fortune, his compass, his anchor in the midst of storms. Now, nowadays, you will grant me without difficulty, these capital truths have singularly declined among men.

What is God? For many, it's a word. For others, it is evil. For the multitude, God is a kind of old dethroned monarch, whom one can forget, defy, insult with impunity. What is society? An unmanned ship that sails with the winds; a burning arena where power, wealth, honors are the prize of the strongest and the most skilful; an edifice of human manufacture that irresponsible man arranges as he pleases. What is the Church?

An institution that has had its day; an obstacle rather than a means; a decrepit woman who has no more milk to give.

Such are the outrages that we allow ourselves, day in and day out, in words and actions. Then we turn to the Catholics and ask them ironically: “Where is your God? Where are the social laws you speak of? What is your Church?” If there is a torture for us, is it not to hear thus flouting all that we respect, all that we believe, all that we love? What could be more desirable than to see God our father and the Church our mother avenged with brilliance! Well, this **dazzling revenge** comes from events which are preparing and already taking place.

What do you mean ? If the man you love most in the world had told you, twenty years ago, a series of facts, beyond all human forecasts, is it not true that seeing all these facts unforeseen, literally accomplished, your confidence would be won, your affection delighted, happy and proud to have as a friend a man inspired by God, a prophet of the first order? Now, not twenty years ago, but **twenty centuries ago,** the object of all our affections, **the Son of God,** who came among men, **predicted to us what we see.**

Did he not tell us and make us say: “A day will come when there will be hardly any faith on earth. Having once again become like the contemporaries of the deluge, enemies of the truth, eager for fables and lies, men will no longer think of anything but their bodies. To drink, to eat, to build, to marry, to sell and to buy: such will be their only occupation. God, the soul, eternity will no longer be anything for them.

“For you these last days will be perilous times: the world will be peopled with selfish, greedy, arrogant, proud, blasphemous men, rebellious to their parents, ungrateful, stained with crimes, denatured, enemies of peace, slanderers, intemperate, cruel, without affection, traitors, insolent, proud, loving pleasures more than God, and showing the appearance of virtue without having the reality of it.

Isn't this a painting from nature? Of all these features, which one does not apply to the current world, taken in its generality; and that with a truth that does not suit any other era? I know it: in all times there have been errors and crimes; but the apology of error, but the legal recognition of error within Catholic nations; but crime without remorse, injustice without restitution, scandal without reparation; but the theory of crime, the apology of crime, the pride of crime and of all crimes; not only revolt against God, against the Church, against the powers; but the systematic denial of the authority of God, of the Church and of kings; but the theory of revolt, the apology of revolt, the pride of revolt, the legal consecration of the very principle of all revolt: this is what one finds only in the present world, and what makes the proper character of his perversity.

This, my friend, was seen and predicted two thousand years ago. What could be more incredible than such a prophecy? What could be more divine than such a view? How many mysteries had to be unraveled before arriving at this one! At the time when these pa-

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roles came from the mouth of the Son of God and His messengers, the world was not yet Christian. To verify them, he first had to become so, which seemed impossible; he had to stay that way for a long time, which was unforeseeable. But what seemed the most unforeseeable and the most impossible was that one day the world would forget the monstrous slavery, the profound degradation, the lamentable miseries from which Christianity had rescued it; that he would trample under foot the blood of Calvary, the price of his redemption; that he would take a dislike to the liberties, the enlightenment, the happiness due to the Gospel; that he would recall with ardor his ancient tyrant and drive out his benefactor, overwhelming him with outrages and crying out to him: We no longer want you to reign over us!

I repeat, what could be more **incredible !** And yet the incredible is before our eyes. Our Lord has therefore seen well; He saw what no human eye could penetrate. Considered in this way, the spectacle of the present world, however distressing it may be, consoles and delights me. Better than all reasoning, it demonstrates my faith, by demonstrating the divinity of its author.

Now come the wicked ask the Catholic: Where is your God? The Catholic will answer him: My God! It is here. He sees you, He hears you, He will judge you and your fellow men. Two thousand years ago He chiselled your portrait and announced everything you say and everything you do, even your hidden infamies. The stars of the firmament tell me His glory with less eloquence than your crimes and your blasphemies, without example and without name, reveal to me His infinite prescience. I see you: I believe.

The same consolation for us, my dear friend, in the revolutions that are upsetting the present world. No more than man, society has made itself. A divine creation, it exists by virtue of fundamental laws which are not its work. Live and prosper, if it observes them; to degenerate and perish if it violates them: such is the alternative from which it cannot escape. All the laws, divinely given to human societies, are summed up in one. It was said to them: “Like man himself, of whom you are only the development, you are created and brought into the world to know God, to love Him, to serve Him and thereby achieve happiness”.

To this law the divine legislator has given a sanction no less certain than the law. He said, “You reap what you sow. Justice elevates nations, sin makes them unhappy. Any nation, any kingdom that refuses to serve Me will perish. If the Lord does not guard the city, it is in vain that those who guard it watch. I am the immortal King of the ages; the kings are only My ministers. All owe Me obedience and fidelity, as vassals to their suzerain. If they dare to rebel against Me, I will smash them like earthen vessels. Yesterday at the peak of power, you will seek them out and they will be no more. With them will perish their works and the societies that they will have wanted to found without Me, far from Me, in spite of Me”.

Such is **the great charter of humanity.** Where are the governments and peoples today who remember it? Let the Catholic beware of recalling it, he would be answered with blasphemies. “Our word is ours; we are the right. We will say, we will do, we will order, we will defend, according to our good pleasure; we report to no one”. This is what has been said for a long time, in all tones and in all languages.

Seeing the prosperity of the rebels, the Catholic himself is tempted to ask himself where are the divine laws of societies. Laws and sanctions seem to darken in his eyes. May he be reassured and consoled. Here is the darkness dissipating. **The divine basis of societies will reappear.** For those who know how to see, it reappears already surrounded by an unknown radiance.

Look for yourself, dear friend, what a spectacle present Europe today? More revolutions and social revolutions in a year than before in a century. Peoples playing with the crowns of kings, like children with rattles. For seventy years, thirty-nine thrones have fallen; twenty-two exiled dynasties, traveling on foot on all the roads of Europe. Twenty-five charters and constitutions acclaimed, sworn and torn. The most opposed mental forms govern, succeeding each other like the leaves on the trees, or like the clothes of Harlequin on the back of the actor. The world on a volcano, and all those who are still called princes, kings, emperors, tossed and tottering on their thrones, like the sailor at the top of the ship during a storm.

To narrow the horizon, see what is happening today in Italy, especially in Naples. A buccaneer undertakes the conquest of a kingdom of ten million souls, a whip in hand. Until Capua, Garibaldi only accuses eight dead and thirty-five wounded. He arrives in the capital. While fidelity took refuge among women and peasants, here was a whole people of generals, land and sea officers, administrators, nobles, scholars, all brought up for forty years by religious and priests, who run to betrayal as one runs to glory. Faced with universal defection, the king fled, the monarchy crumbled, the nation was stricken from the number of nations, to become a proconsulate of some new empire.

All of Europe, and we were the first to blush for Naples. Let's not be too proud. What did we do at home a few years ago, and what show did we give to the world? In 1848, two hundred and fifty democrats overthrew the French monarchy in a few hours. Eight days later, thirty-six million men were on their knees! There is Spain; there is Europe. So what is Europe? You said it yourself: a rotten plank that a kick is enough to crumble into dust.

But Europe is what we made it. What do these perpetual agitations, these incredible shames, these sudden catastrophes say to the Catholic? They tell him more about the inanity of human-made societies and about the evidence of divine laws than all the books of political philosophy.

For him, **these incessant oscillations are material proof that modern Europe is a magnetic needle. who lost the pole.**

For him, these **incredible shames** are the natural result of an education which arms against nothing, and the just punishment of a company obstinately unfaithful to this divine law: "What the man will have sown it will reap it". **Only one thing arms man against evil, that is Religion.** At the time of the great struggles of duty against interest, of honor against felony, **only Religion inspires sublime devotion, heroic fidelity. To arm man, Religion must be the soul of his soul: it will never be so except through education.**

Europe has closed its eyes to these elementary truths, and its ears to the words of the head of the Church. Pius IX himself has

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said: "The great lever of the Revolution, which today puts the papacy in danger, is admiration for pagan antiquity".
It remains to be seen how, after eighteen centuries, this fanatical admiration is still very much alive, at the very center of Catholicism, in exclusively Catholic generations brought up exclusively by the Catholic clergy. Despite this solemn warning, despite the terrible lessons of experience, the knowledge of evil and the imminence of danger, we have continued and continue to give, for ten years, to Italian, French and European youth as models and for masters, the authors, who we dare call of the golden age: that is to say, the eternal panegyrists of pagan antiquity, of old Brutus, of old institutions, in a word, of the old glory of Pagan Rome.

Thus, obstinate despiser of the laws of Providence, the present world sows weeds with both hands, with the pretension, by means of a certain culture of which it believes it has the secret, to transform the nature of things and to reap good grain. A senseless and culpable attempt! He is punished where he sins. The generations he poisoned return to him what they received. They drive out their masters, dethrone kings, overthrow from top to bottom an order of things which is not that which they have been made to admire.

While awaiting the solemn day when **God will render to each according to his works,** these unfortunate victims of a disastrous education call upon governments and upon the masters, authors and promoters of this education, anathemas . and the **punishments** with which they are meted.

In exile, in prisons and even at the foot of the scaffold, where culpable aberrations lead them, they say like Ruffini, Gallenga, Mélégari, Orsini and all the revolutionaries who have revealed the cause of their aberrations: "The two **homes republican ideas in Europe are the colleges and the secret societies.** It is very true, **we are revolutionaries and democrats.** It is from our ranks that the assassins of kings come. But whose fault is it?
We are what we were made; and it is our masters who have made us what we are. It was in college, among the republicans and regicides of antiquity, with whom you made us spend our youth, that we drew our enthusiasm for old Rome and our hatred for kings. Strike us, proscribe us; but if you want to be just, after having tried the assassins, do it to those who raise them" (Textual words of the Italian Revolutionaries today at the gates of Rome. See the Opinion of January 2, 1858).

As for these repeated thunderbolts, which smash in the twinkling of an eye the oldest monarchies, the apparently strongest institutions, it is for the Catholic the justice of God which passes. It is the sovereign Legislator who avenges His laws; who confounds the workers of Babel; and which, stripping the guilty nations of their vain tinsel, makes a spectacle of their nakedness to the world. Doubtless he is far from applauding evil; but he rejoices to see his faith strengthened and Providence demonstrated. **The laborer can be guilty: the work is divine.**

When Nebuchadnezzar set Judea to fire and blood, when he sacked Jerusalem, profaned the vases of the sanctuary, slaughtered the priests, led captive the people of God, and of the bloody ruins which he had heaped up, made a pedestal for his pride, his work was satanic. It is nonetheless true that Nebuchadnezzar was **the instrument of divine justice.** In his hands the vengeful sword shone with such brilliancy that it forced the Jews themselves to cry out: “You are just, Lord! we have violated Your laws; You treat us as we deserve”.

The same reasoning applies to Nebuchadnezzars of all ages. In order to reveal His providence in the government of societies, **God arms the iniquity of some to punish the iniquity of others. The weaker the instrument and the more terrible the punishment, the more manifest the action from above becomes.**

When, after a day of heavy heat, God wants to refresh the atmosphere and restore its transparency, He calls the storm. In the blink of an eye, his mission is accomplished. The air is purified, nature upset. We can see the foundations of the overturned buildings, the roots of the uprooted trees. Such are revolutions in the moral order.

When the great truths, the bases of the universal order, are obscured by the passions, distorted by sophistry to the point of being almost as if they were not, the Almighty rises up in His wrath. He shakes societies, uproots empires and lays bare the **eternal foundations** His hand gave them. From the midst of the ruins, the truth shines with a new brilliance, consoling for the good and formidable to the wicked.

In the days of uncertainty and darkness in which we live, this solemn demonstration of Providence is the se count and very real consolation of the Christians. There are others that I will send you by the next mail.

All yours.

LETTER XV

DEAR

FRIEND, The **divine foreknowledge** of Our Lord, Providence, who governs societies, proven to the evidence by the double deluge of iniquities which defile modern nations and of catastrophes with which they are struck, there you have it, my friend , the first two and very solid consolations of the Catholic today.

There is a third, even bigger one.

To know that our beloved Mother, **the Roman Church, is the only, ever faithful and ever fruitful spouse of the God of Calvary ;** to know that with certain science, without having to resort either to books or to doctors; to see it with one's eyes, as one sees the sun: such is our supreme consolation today.

The Catholic owes it to the deluge of persecutions directed against the Holy See. “O You, whose wisdom equals goodness, may he cry out with the prophet, Lord, You have proportioned Your consolations to the multitude of my sorrows. My mother is outraged. I cry with her; but I overflow with joy in the midst of his tribulations”.

You ask me how I understand it. And I ask you, my friend, how do you hear the words spoken, eighteen centuries ago, about your mother and mine? “If you were from the city of Satan, the city of Satan would love you; but because you are not from the city of Satan, the city of Salan will hate you. You will be an eternal object of hatred because of Me. They will persecute you, rob you, bring you before the courts, heap reproaches on you, pursue you with insults and slander because of My name. They will go so far as to say and make believe that by putting you to death, they are serving the interests of peace, freedom, justice, the cause of

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God Himself".

Centuries will pass, men and empires will pass, heavens and earth will pass; but these words will not pass. Extending throughout the world, they will be accomplished as long as the Church remains in the world. However, she will remain there until she has received the last breath of the last of the elect.

What does the God of the Crib and the Cross promise His spouse? A **crown of thorns ;** a crown that will be given to her, because she is His bride, the mother of His children, the repository of His doctrine. This diadem of pain is promised only to her. In all places, through all centuries, he will distinguish it from lying sects, none of which will be able to usurp it. As long as she remains faithful, he will never desert her virginal brow.

"We understand, exclaimed with transport, sixteen hundred years ago, the illustrious bishop of Carthage, Saint Cyprian, we clearly penetrate the salutary designs of the divine Majesty in the persecutions. **To confuse heretics, God shows what the Church is; who is the unique bishop, chosen by the divine order; what are the priests, united to the bishop by priestly honour; what is the true people united to Jesus Christ and the flock of the Lord bound by charity; which are those that the enemy attacks, and which, on the contrary, are those that he spares. The enemy of Jesus Christ attacks only the camps of Jesus Christ; he only persecutes His soldiers. As for the heretics, who have already become his own, he leaves them alone. His only care is to strike down those who are still standing.** (Ad Lucium, ep. 58).

When, after eighteen centuries of incessant combat, the Catholic sees the same preference reserved exclusively for the Roman Church; when he sees the days of his childhood reappear for his mother; when he sees the world of today, kings, emperors and peoples taking his back for an anvil and forging on it, like the world of old; when he hears the same insults, the same calumnies, the same designs, the same hypocrisies, the same violence; in a word, when he perceives on the lips of his venerable mother the same cup of bitterness which she drank in her cradle, he also sees shining on her head, with an ever ancient and ever new splendor, the diadem of sorrows. , an incommunicable sign of his incorruptible fidelity.

With what tenderness he embraces this august and dear mother! With what noble feeling of pride he said to himself: I am **his son; the son of the true wife !** Put away the sophisms of impiety ; behind the scandals and failures of the false brothers; put away the threats of tyranny: I am my mother's son and the possessor of the truth. **Owner of the truth! of this truth which remains eternally, which illuminates the present and assures the future!**

Do you believe, dear friend, that there is in the bad times in which we find ourselves, a consolation comparable to that? As for me, I know neither superior nor equal, except that of knowing that the powers of evil will not prevail against the Church; that she will wear down her enemies, as the file wears down iron; that not a hair will fall from our heads without the permission of the almighty Father who watches over us; who is with us during the tribulation; who counts each of our pains and who will speak through our mouths before the persecuting tribunals of our faith.

Such are the **fundamental consolations** of the Catholic in the present circumstances. If there is none sweeter, there is none more fruitful. The calm in the midst of the storm, the firmness of character, the greatness of soul, the unfailing fidelity, the noble sacrifice, the gentle resignation of the confessor and, if necessary, the heroic courage of the mar tyr: in in a word, everything that honors man and sanctifies the Christian comes from there, like the fruit of the tree; and the scent of the flower.

These consolations, you tell me, would be without mixture, if it were not for the thought of the **sufferings reserved for the vouchers and defections,** perhaps numerous, which are to be feared.

We are Catholics, we reason as Catholics. If gold could speak, it would rejoice to be put in the crucible. Where does he lose the coarse alloy that dishonors him? Where does it acquire the value that makes its price and the dazzling brilliance with which it charms the eye? Immortal gold destined to shine like the stars of the firmament in the court of the great King, must not the Christian be **purified ?** Isn't it in his interest to be **here below,** rather than elsewhere? The Master and Model of the elect, did he not tremble with joy at the sight of His cross? Besides, what are the tribulations of time compared to the delights of eternity?

And then, is it not necessary for the Mother of heroes, the Catholic Church, to show her eternal fecundity throughout the ages? Must she not make all **false virtues** pale before the virtues of her children? Who will perform these miracles, if not the suffering of the good? Today more than ever, aren't these miracles necessary?

When, with the eye of faith, we look at the face of the Christian world, what do we see? **Millions of baptized souls who live as if they were not: other millions of half-Christians whose lukewarmness provokes only disgust; a degenerated race, with languid faith, lukewarm zeal, softened morals, frivolous thoughts, sensual and selfish habits; fluctuating reeds in the winds of the temptations of mind and heart; eternal lame people who always have one foot in good and the other in evil; in the midst of all this, hardly a small number of Christians really worthy of this great name.** Was it worthwhile for the Son of God to come down from heaven and shed His blood, to obtain such a result?

At this spectacle a **mortal boredom** seizes the heart. Life weighs you down and you aspire either to leave the world or to see the face of the earth renew. To the tribulation is reserved this wonder. As lightning tears the cloud, **trial tears the linen of indifference in which the Christian is wrapped. She awakens the sleeping, she raises the dead.** Earthly preoccupations, the love of luxury and well-being, all this **fascination with the trifle** which amuses, which seduces and which loses, gives way to grave thoughts. The Christian returns to himself; and such would have been lost in the calm of

[1] We are told from London that at this moment the English Protestants are clapping their hands at each new humiliation of the Roman Church. Let them calm down, it will never happen as much to theirs. Poor people! who no longer even know how to read the Bible and who rejoice in what makes our glory and their shame. Is it not written that Christ must suffer to enter into His glory? Is not the true Church here below the continued person of Jesus Christ? Can she reach the end of her pilgrimage other than by persecution?

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peace, who save themselves by the dangers, privations and fatigues of war.

It is then that **souls are tempered again** and that **men of heroic virtue** appear , who serve as **models** for future generations and as **living demonstrations of the truth of the Catholic Church.** This has been the case in all ages: ours is no exception. Without the persecution directed against the Holy See, would the world have witnessed one of the finest spectacles it has ever beheld?

New Maccabees, in their prime, rising to defend the sacred land of Israel; abandoning their family and their country, renouncing all hopes here below; struggling, despite their small number, against overwhelming forces, and, although murdered and betrayed, working wonders of valor, until, falling as heroes, they honor the Church and humanity itself , by a death more glorious than their life: is there a heart so cold that did not beat at this spectacle? Ah! at the same time that they make one proud to be a Catholic, such miracles console many sorrows.

You are afraid of **defections :** they are doubtless sad. However, they also have their **consoling side.** Listen to our ancestors. "The Church is an area," says Saint Chrysostom. There we must be beaten and winnowed. When the grain is full, it comes out of its envelope as soon as it is lightly beaten. If he is small and thin, it is more difficult for him to get out. Empty, it does not come out of it at all; it remains in the envelope to be thrown into the fire with the straw. Thus all men are enclosed in their earthly affections as in chaff. **He who is sincerely virtuous, at the slightest tribulation comes out of his gross affections and goes to God.** If he is a little unfaithful, he does so only after great tribulations. If he is completely unfaithful and empty, we can beat him up: he does not leave his guilty life and ends up being thrown out of the area with the infidels". (In Matth., c. III).

The **separation of true Christians from false Christians** matters much more to us than the sorting out of good and bad grain matters to the plowman. By rejecting from the bosom of the Church the members who dishonor her, she silences the wicked and drives away from the fold the **bad apples** which could infect the good ones. As for the truly righteous, persecution causes far fewer of them to fall than one might think. **All that appear right are not: the test reveals the truth.** "Let no one believe that the good can separate themselves from the Church. No one gives himself up to heretics except the sinner. **Heresies have great force against those whose faith is not strong.** It is very rare that those who would have saved themselves in the Church are dragged down by trial to the point of perishing outside the Church".

Thus speak, according to their personal experience, Saint Cyprian, Tertullian, Saint Augustine (De unit. Eccl., Proescript., c. II; De ver. Relig., C. VIII, and Ps. X). **It is therefore false that many of those who would have saved themselves without the persecution, are lost in the persecution.** Ordinarily persecution surprises the Church at a time when the morals of Catholics are so bad that a **small number** would save themselves by remaining in the Church (Muzarelli, Tribulation de l'Eglise, p. 18).

This is not all, the God who knows how to draw good from evil, brings out from the falls themselves ineffable consolations. All those who have had the misfortune to weaken, do not persevere in their cowardice. There are some who, at the height of the fight, **tear themselves away from apostasy.** Tormented outside the Church by the heart-rending remorse of their conscience, more than they have been in the Church by the threats of her enemies, they recognize their fault, and by their return bear striking witness to the **truth .** and renew for the Church all the joys of the feast where the father of the prodigal received his penitent son.

If the soldier, for a moment unfaithful, procures such sweet consolations for the Church, understand the happiness with which he is intoxicated who has never deserted his flag; who defended it with intrepidity on twenty battlefields and who returns all covered with glorious wounds. With what maternal pride the Church shows this to her friends and her enemies! Words fail him to express his joy. Listen to what she

said, sixteen centuries ago, through the organ of Saint Cyprian. "Finally, here he is on this much-desired day. The dreadful darkness of a long night is succeeded by divine light. With what joy do we see the confessors who have distinguished themselves by their faith! We can't get enough of kissing them, hugging them. You have conquered the world; you have offered a glorious spectacle to the angels; you have set an example for future races. These venerable hands have resisted sacrilegious sacrifices; those lips, sanctified by the body and blood of the Lord, would not be defiled by the remains of idols. Your spotless brow suffered not that the sign of the devil rested where God engraved His image: he reserved himself for the immortal crown.

"With what joy does the Church welcome you into her bosom on your return from combat! What happiness she finds in you when you open her doors, so that you enter with the trophies won from vanquished enemies! Women also participate in the triumph . By fighting they **have overcome two enemies: the world and their weakness.** Young virgins, tender children whose virtue has surpassed age, you return with a double harvest of glory. You are the joy of Israel, the honor of the Church: your glory is the glory of all the people". (From lapsis).

Such, then, is persecution in its providential results: **IT ALWAYS REJUVENATES THE CHURCH.** Hence these transports of maternal joy and these hymns of triumph. She sings her finest canticles only after the great battles: peace does not hear them. Since this is so, and the joys of the Church must be our joys, as her sorrows are our sorrows, you see, my dear friend, that nineteenth-century Catholics can bravely bear the present and await the future with peace of mind.

Only two things are required of them: **fidelity to their duties and confidence in Him who said: "All the hairs of your head are numbered; not one will fall without the permission of your Heavenly Father". With this, the Christian can suffer, he can die. Suffering for him is not an evil, it is a gain; death is not a defeat, it is a triumph:** Evangelium tenens et præcepta custodiens, occidi potest, vines non potest.

All yours.

PARIS, November 23, feast of Saint Clement, pope and martyr.

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